Eighteenth Century Scottish Humanism

And The Poetry Of Robert Fergusson

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The research and writing of this thesis were undertaken entirely by me. To the best of my knowledge all sources have been fully acknowledged.

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PREFATORY NOTE

Most of Chapter 1 has appeared under the following titles in two separate publications:

"The Intellectual Background of the Vernacular Revival before Burns", SSL, XVI (1981) 160-187.

"The Vernacular Movement", A Companion to Scottish Culture, edit. by David Daiches (London 1981).

ABSTRACT

In the main historical and critical analyses of eighteenth century Scotland have concentrated on the society and culture of the literati, the Presbyterian Moderate, the Whig utilitarian, while ignoring considerable subcultures within the nation. This thesis examines Robert Fergusson's poetry in relation to eighteenth century Scottish humanism, the Scotland of the old European Scot, of the Episcopalian and Catholic, Tory and Jacobite.

The introductory chapters first place the early Scottish humanists, who were responsible for the Vernacular Revival, in a historical and philosophical context, tracing the evolution of historicist and primitivist ideas in Britain, and explaining how these ideas fit so neatly into their cosmology; and, second, define what is meant by Scottish humanism, using Fergusson as a prime example of that subculture.

The succeeding chapters analyse Fergusson's country verse in relation to the Tory social ideal, and the attempt to reconcile progress with primitivism, and in relation to the disintegration of that same ideal with the Whig Agrarian Revolution. In these poems the themes are skilfully represented through an elaborate pastoral framework and rhetorical structure, where the older Scotland is an Edenic garden, and the newer, a desert waste.

With chapters 6 and 7 the humanist rhetorical structure, especially insect and animal imagery, Presbyterian pulpit rhetoric, the pastoral foil, and the subtle use of seventeenth century forms are considered in the light of the poet's rendering of a conventional literary city, the New Babylon, which the poet secularises into modern Whig Edinburgh and attacks in all its Whiggish guises of luxury,

utility, determinism and sentimentalism.

The concluding chapter considers the poet's attempt, as a humanist 'maker', to reconstruct an idealised Auld Reikie of the past and to resolve tensions within himself. In so doing Auld Reikie, as a microcosm of the concordia discors principle of the cosmos, becomes a heavenly city of the imagination.

ABBREVIATIONS

JEGP	Journal of English and German Philology
MLN	Modern Language Notes
SEC	Scottish Economic Classics
SHS	Scottish History Society
SSL	Studies in Scottish Literature
STS	Scottish Text Society
TESS	Times Educational Supplement - Scotland
TLS	Times Literary Supplement

CHAPTER 1

THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE VERNACULAR REVIVAL BEFORE BURNS

Since the early nineteenth century, when James Sibbald passed his damning judgements upon the Scots Vernacular Revival,[1] literary historians have been dismissive and unsearching in their appreciation of the vernacular movement, regarding it as provincial, backward looking, or narrowly national, and relating its causes to the most obvious factors present at its birth: the aftermath of the church settlement of 1688 and the 1707 Union. The Revival appears to them to be a healthy literary reaction to the end of a century of stultifying church hostilities and, at the same time, a rabid national response to the English domination of Scotland after 1707.[2] Their interpretation, it is true, argues from what cannot be denied: these two factors did influence the whole of Scottish culture very profoundly. Nonetheless, it skirts the important question of why the literary response took the particular form that it did; and, in this omission, neglects other, equally conspicuous causes of the Revival. It fails, notably, to ask the crucial question why Scots language, with its rural and ancient associations, was chosen as a literary vehicle for a group of urbane and socially and politically conservative men.

The causes of the Scots Revival lie in the literary and philosophical circumstances of the times and, at heart, in the nature of these men. In urging that the Revivalists did not suddenly cast off their urbanity with their literary vocation and become provincials,

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1. Sibbald describes the Revivalists as men of 'depraved taste' who impeded the improvement of literature in Scotland. Chronicle of Scottish Poetry (4 vols, Edinburgh 1802) IV, xlv.

2. See for example T.F. Henderson Scottish Vernacular Literature (3rd edit., Edinburgh 1910) 399; J.H. Millar A Literary History of Scotland (London 1903) 381; John W. Oliver "The Eighteenth Century Revival", Edinburgh Essays On Scots Literature (Edinburgh 1933) 80; Kurt Wittig The Scottish Tradition in Literature (Edinburgh and London 1958) 153.

it will be necessary to trace the evolution of certain literary and linguistic theories in Britain from the sixteenth century and to consider the relationship of European Enlightenment philosophy to Scots vernacular literature; that is, to establish that the Scots Revival and the European Enlightenment are not, as the historians would have it, mutually exclusive. In seeking further explanations for the Revival we are naturally led to an examination of these men as Scottish humanists, Scottish humanism being a large subculture which had once been the ascendant culture of Scotland up to the seventeenth century. The Scots Revival derived from a Weltanschauung radically different from that of the moderate Calvinist, utilitarian world of the eighteenth century; it belonged to an outlook that looked backwards and forwards at the same time, retaining the best of the past and assimilating what it wanted of the present. Against this, Fergusson and his poetry appear less the anomaly, and can be seen as the culmination of a great and consistent humanist tradition.

Arguments favourable to the revival of literature in Scots begin in the sixteenth century and evolve over the next two centuries. Two ideas arose out of the Ancient versus Modern controversy that were to persist in different forms: namely, that national languages are the unique expression of each nation's natural genius, itself mainly determined by climate and topography; and, second, that the language of poetry is natural and unpolished, the spoken tongue of the uneducated. On this side of the debate were the early Moderns, Nash, Puttenham, Chapman, in the sixteenth century; Daniel, Cowley, Temple, and Dennis, in the seventeenth.[1] Daniel, for example, in

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1. See the discussion of the Moderns in G.M. Miller The Historical Point of View in English Literary Criticism from 1570-1770 (Heidelberg 1913) 1-101.

the debate concerning classical and indigenous metrics argues that

> Euery language hath her proper number or measure fitted to vse and delight, which Custome intertaininge by the allowance of the Eare, doth indenize and make naturall.[1]
> (A Defence of Ryme - 1603)

And in his appreciative essays on the natural and vigorous poetry of the Goths, "Of Heroic Virtue" and "Of Poetry", Temple stimulated an interest in ancient poetry which reached fruition in the activities of the Wartons half a century later.

With the critics were English linguists and antiquaries who applied these ideas to Scotland. The Scots tongue won recognition from 1623, the year of Sir Henry Spellman's lectureship in Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge and William L'Isle's publication of a treatise by Aelfric. This was in conjunction with the revival of Old English. Later in the century the Middle Scots poem Christ's Kirk On The Green was edited with Polemo Middinia by Edmund Gibson, Anglo-Saxon scholar and Bishop of Lincoln, who first described this unaureate folk based poetry as classic.[2] In his day Scottish songs and ballads too enjoyed a vogue in England, chiefly through the plays of Mrs Behn and Tom D'Urfey, and the song collections of D'Urfey and Playford. Long before Ramsay these English song collectors and composers invented the myth of a pastoral Scotland, full of unlettered Jockys and Moggys, who spoke a pure poetic language and who demonstrated the virtues of the simple life.[3]

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1. In G. Gregory Smith Elizabethan Critical Essays (2 vols, Oxford 1904) II, 359.

2. See William Geddie A Bibliography Of Middle Scots Poets (STS, Edinburgh and London 1912) lvi.

3. E.g. "The Scotch Lasses Song", in Thom. D'Urfey Wit and Mirth (6 vols, London 1719-20) II, 159. For a fuller discussion of this see the excellent chapter on "Scottish Song" in Ann. W. Green The Song As A Form In The Eighteenth Century: with particular reference to the work of Charles Dibdin, Senior (unpublished Oxford B. Litt thesis 1967).

In Scotland the two ideas of national and poetic language appeared quite early. In fact, G.M. Miller credits James VI with the first explicit statement in Britain of historical criticism,[1] though he might well have mentioned the first "Proloug" of Gavin Douglas's Aeneis, which proposes to give Scottis the status of the other heroic languages. Nevertheless, in "Ane Schort Treatise" (1584) James VI gives grounds for writing a work on Scottis poetry from the basis of a unique language and poetry. As he says, his second major reason for adding another treatise to the numerous works on the subject is

> ... That as for thame
> that hes written in it of late, there hes
> neuer ane of thame written in our language.
> For albeit sindrie hes written of it in
> English, quhilk is lykest to our language, zit
> we differ from thame in sindrie reulis of
> Poesie, as ze will find be experience.[2]

Elsewhere in the "Treatise" he condemns imitation of foreign models since 'Inuentioun ... is ane of the cheif properteis of ane Poete' and must 'come of Nature', of native descriptions and subject matter.[3] His directives 'to frame zour wordis and sentencis according to the mater, which he discusses in relation to all classes of poetry, make

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1. The Historical Point of View, 50-1. Miller might well have also noted Hector Boece's assertions of 1527 in The Chronicles of Scotland as translated by John Bellenden, ca. 1533: 'Forthir, they that spekis with the auld toung of ... [Scotland] hes thair asperatioun, thair dipthongis, and thair pronunciatioun better than ony other pepill .... Heirfore I say thair is na region in the warld sa barrant nor unfrutfull be distance fra the sonne bot be providence of God all maner of necessaryis to the sustentatioun of man may be gottin plesandly in it gif thair war sic pepill that culd laubour it effering to [appropriate to] the nature thairof .... Quoted in Arthur H. Williamson Scottish National Consciousness in the Age of James VI (Edinburgh 1979) 117.
2. In The Poems Of James VI Of Scotland, edit. by James Craigie (2 vols, STS, Edinburgh and London 1955-58) I, 67.
3. James VI Poems, I, 78-9.

a place, however patronisingly, for a vigorous rural poetry.[1] After John Napier in 1593 and 1611 and, to a greater degree, David Hume of Godscroft in 1644, who defended Scots language and literature as a unique and more vital tradition than that of English,[2] Dryden's friend, Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, whom he admired as that 'noble wit of Scotland',[3] carried on the debate for the national language in the seventeenth century in accordance with the ideas of national disposition and natural expression. In 1673 Sir George says flatly that Scots is superior to French and English; it is 'like our selves, firy, abrupt, sprightly, and bold'; and is more 'natural' in pronunciation than English, as is proven in the ease with which Scotsmen learn Latin, French, Spanish, and other foreign languages.[4] He distinguishes further between English, an 'invented' language, invented by courtiers, and Scots, a 'natural' language, spoken by the commons and by 'learn'd men, and men of businesse'.[5] After Mackenzie of Rosehaugh these arguments fell eventually into the hands of the earliest Revivalists: James Watson, a founding father of the Revival, who edited Mackenzie's Works (1716-22); and Thomas Ruddiman, Mackenzie's successor as Keeper of the Advocate's Library, and one of the chief vernacular printers.

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1. James VI Poems, I, 75-6.
2. See Williamson's discussion of John Napier and David Hume of Godscroft in Scottish National Consciousness, "NOTE 106", 157; also 129-30. Note that Thomas Ruddiman commends Hume of Godscroft's 'ancient Scottish Phrases and Proverbs' in the edition he produced of the seventeenth century writer's The History Of The House and Race Of Douglas and Angus (2 vols, Edinburgh 1743), I, vii-viii.
3. See "Essay On Satire", The Works of John Dryden, edit. by Sir Walter Scott (2nd edit., 18 vols, Edinburgh 1821) XIII, 111.
4. Pleadings, In some remarkable Cases ... (Edinburgh) 17-18.
5. Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, Pleadings, 17.

The eighteenth century Scottish antiquaries and poets, then, inherited the legacy of the Moderns on both sides of the border; they were to make the same assumptions while modifying them with current sympathetic literary and philosophical trends. An obvious case in point is Thomas Ruddiman, a man with a strong sense of the past and a discerning, realistic understanding of the present. In 1710 he and his colleagues produced an edition of Gavin Douglas's Aeneis and revived the age old contentions of the Scottish historical school. Given Douglas's avowed linguistic purpose for Scottis, Ruddiman's choice of that makar was carefully weighed, helping him to strike the right balance between past and present. In the editorial notes to the Aeneis, Ruddiman maintains, with his eyes on the English antiquaries before him, that Middle Scots literature is classic; on a par with that of Chaucer and Gower; and, as a language, equal to Greek and Latin.[1] With Mackenzie of Rosehaugh and the early primitivists, he distinguishes between the 'full Force and genuine Meaning' of Scots and the weak, diffuse quality of English.[2] In short, his arguments deviate little from what came before him, but with one conspicuous exception. He is among the first to suggest that the living speech of 'the Vulgar' is in great part Old Scots.[3] This was a necessary ingredient for the literary status of the colloquial Scots used by Ramsay and his successors. And Ruddiman's suggestion was partly valid. Eighteenth century literary Scots bears little relation to the aureate diction of the makars; least of all to the

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1. Douglas Aeneis (Edinburgh) ii, 487.
2. Douglas Aeneis, ii.
3. Douglas Aeneis, ii-iii. Sir Robert Sibbald suggests this in The History ... Fife and Kinross (Edinburgh 1710) 15-16.

language of Douglas's Aeneis. But it was related to the Middle Scots of Christ's Kirk On The Green; some of Henryson's Moral Faibillis and his lighter pieces; Lyndsay's poems; and many of the traditional ballads and songs published by the eighteenth century collectors. As we shall see, Ruddiman merely blurred the distinction for sound practical and philosophical reasons.

Sir John Clerk of Penicuik was another Scottish antiquary who built upon the old Ancient versus Modern controversy. His "An Enquiry into the Ancient Languages of Great Britain" is an historical apology for vernacular Scots: on one hand, concerning the imposition of English upon Scotland, he cites the historical precedents that 'in all ages it was a common thing for the people of the same nation to have different languages'; on the other, with regard to the history of language in Britain, he argues that the 'old low Scottish language' is actually the 'genuine Saxon', its purest form.[1] Clerk knows the background of debate, and in an admirably compressed passage states his case, judiciously interweaving the watchwords of two centuries into it: 'polish', 'beauty and energy' (the argument from poetic languages); 'sound and gratification', 'Custom' (the argument from natural national language).

> We in Scotland have, no doubt, since the union of the crowns, been endeavouring to polish our language, at least to make it more conformable to that of our neighbours in England; but, if any body will take the trouble to read Blind Harry's Life of Sir William Wallace, or Bishop Gavin Douglas's Virgil, they will discover many words that have not been changed for the better, and some that have a great deal more beauty and energy in them than those we find in our

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1. "An Enquiry ...; being the copy of a paper intended for the Philosophical Society at Edinburgh by Sir John Clerk, 1742", in Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica (8 vols, London 1790) III, 378, 382-3.

> present poetry. But, to dip no farther into this matter than merely the sound and gratification of our ears, it is impossible for me to discern more beauty in this for dis, in the for die, or in that for dat; nor in the following words father, mother, brother, sister, earth, much, and such, for vader, mooder, brooder, zuster, erde, mickle & c. but it would be irksome to carry the comparison farther. Custom, as in matters of dress, gives a beauty to words, yet such as cannot be supported by the best reasons.[1]

The opinions of Dr Alexander Geddes, vernacular poet and antiquary, were generally known decades before his valuable contributions to The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, entitled "Three Scottish Poems, with a previous Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect".[2] His is perhaps a more fully developed statement of Revivalist thought than that of Ruddiman or Clerk of Penicuik, in that he carries the previous inferences of the antiquaries to their logical conclusions. Like Clerk of Penicuik he begins with an historical approach to language in Britain and arrives at various questions regarding the nature of poetry and poetic language. But there is a crucial difference in his conclusion. Scoto-Saxon, he affirms, was at the Union of the Crowns 'equal in every respect, in some respects superior, to the Anglo-Saxon dialect', especially in its 'richness, energy, and harmony'; the variety of its inflections, the boldness of its guttural ch sounds, the harmony of its vowels, the brilliance of its economy. How, then, he ponders, could our forefathers have discarded their tongue for an inferior language? For, above all, Scoto-Saxon was the language of poetry, particularly of epic and tragedy, of 'confessed superiority'.[3] At this point Geddes begins to come out with what

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1. Clerk of Penicuik, "An Enquiry", III, 383.
2. See John M. Good Memoirs Of The Life And Writing Of The Reverend Alexander Geddes, LL.D. (London 1803) 37, 55.
3. "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect", Transactions Of The Society Of The Antiquaries Of Scotland (Edinburgh 1792) I, 404, 416, 418, 420-21.

the others implied, and mentions, as if to create the second premise of a syllogistic defence, that despite the loss of Scots among the learned, it yet lives on in its 'native purity' in the dialects of the common folk: 'Amang the uncurruptit poor'.[1] The reader is prepared for the final deduction that a modern Scots poet might use vernacular words for greater linguistic effect than would be produced 'by their English equivalents', and that a modern Scots epic on Fergus II might be composed from a conflation of Scottish dialects.[2] The epic aside, this was no more nor less than a defence of vernacular poetry as it had been written throughout the century.

There was another group in Scotland that supported, at least as much as they opposed, the Vernacular Revival; and that was the literati. The two seminal ideas of the Moderns had impressed themselves upon them in a different form, with the rise throughout Europe of full blown primitivist and genetic, or culturally relativist, theories of history. These theories encouraged the patronage of a national 'folk' literature. And, from where the literati stood, direct patronage it was. Hume and Smith were patrons of native poets like Hamilton of Bangour and Dr William Wilkie, both of whom contributed to the Revival.[3] Smith actually wrote the preface to Bangour's Poems On Several Occasions (1748). Beattie, a veritable Jekyl and Hyde on the question of Scots language, aided Alexander Ross in the publication

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1. Geddes "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect", 417, 439; "Epistle To The President", 444.

2. Geddes "Dissertation on the Scoto-Saxon Dialect", 420-421, 425; "Epistle To The President", 454.

3. See especially Ernest C. Mossner The Forgotten Hume (New York 1943) 66, 74-82. The work contains a good deal on Hume's literary patronage.

of his works and composed a dedicatory epistle in Scots to Ross's Helenore. William and his son Alexander Fraser Tytler took an unusual interest in several vernacular poets: Ramsay, John Mayne, John Black, William Tennant, and Burns.[1] There were at times substantial contributions made to the Scots Revival in the literati's own hand. The Tytlers helped with Johnson's Scots Musical Museum, and published the Poetical Remains of James the First, King of Scotland (William Tytler 1783) and 'Remarks on the Genius and Writings of Allan Ramsay' (Alexander Fraser Tytler in Ramsay's Poems 1800).[2] Lord Hailes too edited Ancient Scottish Poems (1770), sent specimens of a projected Scottish Glossary to antiquaries in Scotland, and offered Boswell help with his own projected Scots dictionary.[3] Privately and publicly the literati agreed with the critical opinions of Ruddiman, Clerk of Penicuik, and the others. For the interested, all the general contentions about Scots language, its comparability with Greek and Latin, its purity and boldness, its poetic merit, can be found in Adam Smith's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, Boswell's "French Theme" on a Scots dictionary; and in several comments of Lord Monboddo in Of The Origin And Progress Of Language.[4] They are most amusingly recast by Smollett, in Humphry Clinker, through the character of

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1. See Claire Lamont William Tytler, his son Alexander Fraser Tytler (Lord Woodhouselee), and the encouragement of literature in late eighteenth-century Edinburgh (unpublished Oxford University B. Litt. dissertation 1968) 78, 127, 192.

2. See Lamont Tytler, 76-7.

3. See R.H. Carnie A Biographical And Critical Study Of The Life And Writings Of Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes (unpublished St Andrews University Ph.D. dissertation 1954), 83, 136.

4. Smith Lectures ..., edit. by John M. Lothian (London and Edinburgh 1963) 131; Boswell In Holland 1763-1764, edit. by F.A. Pottle (New York 1952) 164-65; Monboddo Language (6 vols, Edinburgh 1773-92) I, 485; II, 237-38; IV, 107, 170-71.

Lismahago. No doubt they were arguments familiar enough in their day to place before the reading public.

> He (Lismahago) proceeded to explain his assertion that the English language was spoken with greater propriety at Edinburgh than in London. - He said, what we generally called the Scottish dialect was, in fact, true, genuine old English, with a mixture of some French terms and idioms, adopted in a long intercourse betwixt the French and Scotch nations; that the modern English, from affectation and false refinement, had weakened, and even corrupted their language, by throwing out the guttural sounds, altering the pronunciation and the quantity, and disusing many words and terms of great significance. In consequence of these innovations, the works of our best poets, such as Chaucer, Spenser, and even Shakespeare, were become, in many parts, unintelligible to the natives of South Britain, whereas the Scots, who retain the antient language, understand them without the help of a glossary.[1]

Moreover, with Alexander Geddes the literati were prepared to support the use of Scots for pastoral poetry. They were especially pleased with Ramsay's use of it. No less unlikely a proponent than Henry Mackenzie, in a letter to Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock, deems the Gentle Shepherd the finest modern pastoral; remarks on its 'Simplicity' and 'Force', and laments the passing of its language: presently 'one of it's Beauties'.[2] In his Holland journal Boswell places Ramsay in the great tradition of Scottish poetry; and in his Life Of Johnson mentions a conversation with Johnson and Goldsmith where he (Boswell)

> spoke of Allan Ramsay's 'Gentle Shepherd', in the Scottish dialect, as the best pastoral that had ever been written; not only abounding with beautiful rural imagery, and just and pleasing sentiments, but being a real picture of manners ...[3]

Hugh Blair's lecture "Pastoral Poetry - Lyric Poetry" from his Lectures On Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, the bible of Enlightenment

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1. Edit. by Angus Ross (Bungay 1975) 235.
2. Letters To Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock, edit. by Horst W. Drescher (Edinburgh and London 1967) 176.
3. Boswell In Holland, 165; Johnson, edit. by George B. Hill, revised by L.F. Powell (6 vols, Oxford 1934-50) II, 220.

criticism, is proof that this opinion had become orthodox among the literati. In the lecture Blair dismisses Pope's and Philip's pastorals for 'barrenness' of genius while comparing Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd with 'any Composition of this kind, in any language', despite its unique local setting.[1]

Of interest as much for the psychologist as for the literary scholar are the arguments of those who took no part in the Vernacular Revival and those who opposed it strongly. Dr William Robertson, who consciously weeded out Scotticisms from his English prose, falls into the first category. In his History of Scotland Robertson, as one would expect of an historian, justly describes as arbitrary the English linguistic standard applied to Scots after the withdrawal of the court in 1603. The English, he writes, naturally became the sole judges of language and merely rejected 'every form of speech to which their ear was not accustomed'.[2] The Scots tongue at the end of the sixteenth century was, in his estimation, not inferior in 'elegance' or 'purity' to English; even at the time of Union (1707), he observes, members of the Scots Parliament expressed themselves with 'energy' and 'elegance'.[3] His relativist approach also leads him to speculate, somewhat longingly, upon a great linguistic tradition where the various Scots dialects would have been compared to the dialects of Greek,[4] and upon a great literary tradition that might have flourished to the present day.[5] In the second category

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1. (London 1839) 535, 537.
2. (2 vols, London 1759) II, 258.
3. Robertson History of Scotland, II, 257, 260.
4. Of course they were compared to the Greek dialects by both the literati and the Revivalists.
5. Robertson History of Scotland, II, 258.

were the committed Anglicisers. Often their arguments too represent mixed feelings. In Propriety Ascertained In Her Picture, written in a quasi-phonetic spelling, James Elphinston, Edinburgh educationalist and grammarian, sets out to represent Scots as a thing of the past. But, in the tugging of emotions on two sides, his attempt is abortive, and he ends up in a recapitulation of the antiquarians' defence of the language. He commends the English for venerating Douglas and Ramsay with Chaucer and Spenser; he admires Scotland's new found ability to do justice to her 'wonce melodious and expressive, dho now passing, dialect'; having lost his original point, he says, complacently, now the vernacular 'may be regullarly and effectually trezzured' with the dialects of Spain, with Provençal and French, Latin, Greek and Gallic.[1] Sir John Sinclair's pleas against Scots reveal the same divisiveness. To their patent discredit they begin where Ruddiman left off in his observations of 1710 on the Aeneis, and they ineffectually attempt to reverse popular linguistic theories regarding the barrenness of modern language.

> That the Scots should indulge a strong partiality in favour of their own dialect, is the less to be wondered at, when we consider how many words are now condemned as Scotticisms, which were formerly admired for their strength and beauty, and may still be found in the writings of Chaucer, of Spenser, of Shakespeare, and other celebrated English authors. Indeed, many words in the old English or Scottish dialects, are so emphatical and significant, that, as Ruddiman observes, it is difficult to find words in the modern English capable of expressing their full force, and genuine meaning. But what our language has lost in strength, it has gained in elegance and correctness.[2]

And so the arguments ran. Several ideas branched from the two seminal ones of the sixteenth century. Scots, with Old English,

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1. (2 vols, London 1787) II, 273-74.

2. Observations On The Scottish Dialect (London 1782) 78-9.

literature was accepted as classic. Scottis was taken to be the purest Saxon and was placed beside ancient Greek and Latin; as a forceful, energetic tongue it took on northern poetic associations, and was thought superior to English in strength and economy.[1] Custom, from nature, was its source and philosophical justification, as its validity resided in its suitability for the people that created it. Its possibilities for literature were as unlimited as the genius of the artist.

If the ideas that promoted vernacular language were centuries old, they were at the same time quite modern. The Revival, it appears, is a matter of new forces supporting old tendencies: it both continues from the past and looks forward with the times. Those old forces of primitivism and historicism gained momentum in the eighteenth century, were taken up by the Enlightenment, and, more than ever, continued to influence literary taste.

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1. Note that the word 'Dialect' in general came to suggest the four dialects of Ancient Greece, 'each of which was a perfect language in its kind ...'. Encyclopaedia Britannica (3 vols, Edinburgh 1771) II, 431.

A. Primitivism

In her commendable work on primitivism and eighteenth century literature, Lois Whitney discerns a firm link between philosopher and literator in their reaction to the new theories of Hobbes and Mandeville upholding the utility of luxury. She says,

> In the value set on simplicity, propaganda against luxury (in this case 'a literature of primitivism') joins hands with one of the leading ideas of the philosophy of the Enlightenment. [1]

This becomes clearer if we examine some of the implications of primitivism and also, in this connection, the influence of Rousseau, in particular, upon Scottish philosophy. Rousseau and the literati found the modern commercial state sadly wanting; it produced non-citizens; it was overly acquisitive; its practices corrupted the masses, and disqualified everyone from democratic government; still worse, it debilitated the mind of the individual, confined and segregated it within the habits of specialised thinking.[2] The typical reaction to this in Edinburgh was to muster up opposing examples of primitives who possessed those elusive qualities valued by the moderns, and brought together in a national epic like Ossian.[3] But Rousseau, it may be argued, altered the course of Scottish primitivism, and

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1. Primitivism And The Idea Of Progress In English Popular Literature Of The Eighteenth Century (Baltimore 1934) 51. See also 68.

2. See Rousseau "A Discourse On The Arts and Sciences", The Social Contract and Discourses, transl. by G.D.H. Cole, J.H. Brumfitt, and J.C. Hall (London 1973) 5, 10, 16; cf. Smith An Inquiry Into The Nature And Causes Of The Wealth Of Nations (4th edit., London 1874) 322; Ferguson An Essay On The History Of Civil Society 1767, edit. by Duncan Forbes (Edinburgh 1966) 56, 161-62, 186-87, 238-39, 254; Kames Sketches Of The History Of Man (2 vols, Edinburgh 1774) I, 243, 306; Gilbert Stuart A View Of Society In Europe (2nd edit., Edinburgh 1792) 8, 15.

3. See especially Hume's letter to Lord Hailes of August 16, 1760. The Letters of David Hume, edit. by J.Y.T. Greig (2 vols, London 1969) I, 330-31.

changed the reaction in a meaningful way. He enlarged its frame of reference to include the rustics and peasants of the present day. He superimposed the ideally conceived rural past upon the rural present; simply, made the present the past; and his modern rustics primitives. In the country, he says,

> We forget the age we live in, and the vices of our contemporaries, and are transported in imagination to the time of the patriarchs ...[1]

His romanticised farmers are, moreover, the true citizens of modern society, in close communion with nature and the natural social order.

Now Rousseau did talk of farmers in a vague, general way, though, as a proud Swiss, he often found it useful to speak of his farmers as citizens of his own nation; sometimes to conceive of his nation as essentially rural and traditional. His primitivism was in great measure bound up with the preservation of a unique Swiss culture. The Swiss, says he, somewhat defiantly,

> know how to live; not in the sense these words would be taken in France, where it would be understood they had adopted certain customs and manners in vogue ...[2]

It is this side of Rousseau that is worth taking note of; it has its parallels in Scotland in the works of Hutcheson, Millar, Kames, Smith and Reid.[3] Their primitivism too had a distinctly nationalistic bent, and often they tended to domesticate their arguments. Kames was quick to discover vigorous men, of the Ossianic variety admired by Smith and Hume, in several areas of Scotland. And Smith taught

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1. Eloisa ... To Which Is Now First Added, The Sequel of Julia ... (4 vols, London 1784) IV, 30. See also Kennedy F. Roche Rousseau: Stoic and Romantic (London 1974) 52.
2. Eloisa, III, 220.
3. For example, Hutcheson A System Of Moral Philosophy (2 vols, London 1755) I, 197; Reid The Philosophy Of The Active And Moral Powers Of Man, edit. by Sir William Hamilton (2 vols, Edinburgh 1877) II, 147.

his pupils at Glasgow University that the peasants of Scotland were superior, in the idealistic sense, to their counterparts in England and Holland.[1]

These notions were certainly favourable to the Revival; but there were related ideas of greater bearing upon the movement that had adopted a literary 'folk self' and that used the language of contemporary rustics.[2] Rousseau's ideas must be considered of primary importance here. He is himself a bit of a vernacular revivalist when he censures ignorance of the native tongue and asserts that the language of the commonality is that of liberty and continued independence. When he attacks learning for obliterating the peoples' dialects and producing monotonous speech; when he commends the peasants' language of 'plain-spoken goodness', its force and directness; when he protests that literary languages 'lose in power what they gain in clarity', he speaks for vernacular movements throughout Europe.[3] Linguistically the Scottish Enlightenment was with him, at least in so far as it accepted his beliefs about the vitality and purity of primitive (in the wider sense) languages. They almost unanimously allowed that refinement brought artificial language; 'dull and lifeless articulations of unmeaning sounds'; a definite deterioration of verbal power.[4] Poetically they stood with men like Diderot who placed

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1. Kames Sketches, I, 104-05; Smith Lectures On Justice, Police, Revenue And Arms, edit. by Edwin Cannan (Oxford 1896) 256.

2. See Matthew P. McDiarmid's discussion of this in The Poems Of Robert Fergusson (2 vols, STS, Edinburgh and London 1954-56) I, 128.

3. On The Origin Of Language, transl. by J.H. Moran (New York 1966) 24, 27-8, 73; Emile, transl. by Barbara Foxley (London 1957) 39-40, 289.

4. For example, Thomas Reid An Inquiry Into The Human Mind, edit. by Timothy Duggan (Chicago 1970) 57.

the most barbarous people highest on his scale of the poetically spirited.[1] In his course of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at Glasgow University, Smith made the same claims for Scots poetry, ancient and modern. 'Hardyknute', 'Cherry and the Slae', 'Three Died in Lochaber', 'Wallace Wight' were in fact poems he once chose as examples of the 'most excellent' poetry of 'barbarous, least civilised nations'.[2]

European philosophy, this includes Scottish, then, supplied real props for the Vernacular Revival through the equation of rural with primitive. Hoxie N. Fairchild rightly underlines the Arcadian status Collins accords 'not to Indians, or Lapps, but to Scotch peasants' in "Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland".[3] For this is a typical example of the equation applied to literature, as it often was in the numerous revivals that sprang up in Europe.[4]

In England different manifestations of primitivism were conducive to the Scots Revival. English antiquarianism for one followed up its early interest in Middle Scots literature through the efforts of the first literary historians. They gave special attention to Douglas, Dunbar and Lyndsay, and to Scots song and balladry; they also made some attempt to influence the Scots to write a history of their own poetry.[5] In a more general way English primitivist

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1. See Rene Wellek A History of Modern Criticism 1750-1950, (5 vols, London 1955-66) I, 48-50.
2. Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, 131.
3. The Noble Savage (New York 1928) 64, 432-33.
4. For an informed discussion of the Scandinavian revivals see Sigurd B. Hustvedt Ballad Criticism In Scandinavia And Great Britain During The Eighteenth Century (New York 1916).
5. See for example Thomas Warton The Union or Select Scots and English Poems (London 1753) iii; The History of English Poetry (3 vols, London 1774-81) II, 334-35. Percy and Gray, particularly in his "Observations on English Metre", must be borne in mind here.

beliefs about untaught poets[1] naturally reflected upon the Scots Revival, as is evident in Lloyd and Colman's burlesque of "The Bard" by Gray.

> Shall not applauding critics hail the vogue?
> Whether the Muse the stile of Cambria's sons,
> Or the rude gabble of the Huns,
> Or the broader dialect
> Of Caledonia she affect ...
> ("Two Odes - Ode I")[2]

Lloyd and Colman were quite right; Gray's notions did entail the acceptance of vernacular poetry. One interesting, and virtually unknown, example of an English poet's even writing in Scots was a poem composed by Collins, and circulated in Scotland among the literati.[3] Another manifestation of primitivism was English pastoral theory, one strain of which tended to a 'hard' primitivism and called for a 'rude and uncultivated' language. To the Englishman, Scots was better suited for pastoral than his own provincial dialects; it was just that bit exotic.[4] Shenstone was one of the pastoralists who found in the language of Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd 'an admirable kind of Doric'; John Langhorne was another, who drew comparisons between the Greek language and poetry of Theocritus' idylls and a broad Scots doric and pastoral poetry.[5] The extent to which these opinions were in the air and affected the Scots vernacular movement

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1. For a discussion of this in relation to Gray see Chauncey B. Tinker Nature's Simple Plan (London 1922) 63-4, 91.
2. Poems by Robert Lloyd, A.M. (London 1762) 102.
3. See Lamont Tytler, 69-70.
4. See Richard F. Jones "Eclogue Types in English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century", JEGP, XXIV (1925) 51.
5. "To Mr. MacGowan, late of Edinburgh. Sept. 24, 1761" in The Letters of William Shenstone, edit. by Marjorie Williams (Oxford 1939) 597. See also J.E. Congleton Theories of Pastoral Poetry in England 1684-1798 (New York 1968) 273; Langhorne "The Monthly Review for March 1762" in The Monthly Review; or, Literary Journal, XXVI (1762) 189.

from its beginning may be measured by Ramsay's first "Preface" to his works (1721). In it he quotes at length from Dr Sewel, the London editor of one of his pastorals, who ranks him among 'our old English Poets' and classifies his 'Scotticisms' with the 'Doric Dialect of Theocritus'.[1] By 1772 John Aikin could speak objectively of the unmistakable 'advantage' Ramsay had gained by writing in Scots.[2]

Primitivism was obviously beneficial to the vernacular movement, such that the movement gained much through emphasising its rural and Theocritean associations. That the emphasis was conscious is hardly a matter of conjecture.

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1. The Works of Allan Ramsay, edit. by B. Martin, J.W. Oliver, A.M. Kinghorn, A. Law (6 vols, STS, Edinburgh and London 1951-1974) I, xix.

2. "Essay on Ballads and Pastoral Songs", Essays on Song-Writing (2nd edit., Warrington 1774) 34.

B. Historicism

A theory of national art forms and national standards of taste naturally evolved with the eighteenth century comparative and genetic approach to history. Legal historians like Montesquieu based his thesis of the general 'spirit' of a people, in The Spirit of Laws, upon variations of climate, soil, and topography; and additionally attributed to the variations a nation's character of mind and their passions of heart. It was necessary, then, he contended, for government and laws to be 'relative' to these differences that citizens might follow the bent of their 'natural genius'.[1] In short, he would perpetuate national individuality on the basis of law alone. It was not difficult to take this further than law, as Montesquieu and his followers, especially Voltaire, were quick to do. In Voltaire's scheme of things, each nation possessed a unique, and irreplaceable, 'genie', manifested in its customs, manners and language.[2] From this assumption he argued for relative aesthetics and national standards of taste. If nature remains everywhere the same, nations, however, he avers, naturally and legitimately differ; it is wrong to judge of one culture by the criteria of another.[3] In his popular treatise on the subject of taste, The Temple of Taste, Voltaire expounds this theory with specific relation to the 'peculiar genius' of each national language. In a defence of French song for Frenchmen he exclaims, through the character of Cardinal de Polignac, that

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1. (4th edit., 2 vols, Glasgow 1768) I, 7-8, 290, 386-87.
2. The Philosophical Dictionary (Glasgow 1766) 190. See Ira O. Wade The Intellectual Development of Voltaire (Princeton 1969) 127, 158, 165.
3. See for example The Philosophy Of History (Glasgow 1766) 210-11.

> Nature, which is fertile, ingenious, and wise, speaks to all mankind; but with different accents; thus every people has its distinct Language, as well as Genius, its sounds, and its accents, suited to its organs of speech; marked out, with exactness, by the hand of nature herself: the difference is very sensible to a fine and judicious ear.[1]

It followed that each country also had a 'distinct literary expression' to compliment its language: hence, literature was conceived as local and national.[2] And no argument of provinciality could be levelled against it.

In Europe, these ideas bred a strong reaction, mainly to France as it was the dominant culture of the day. Paul Hazard describes the massive countermovement in his work on European thought of the period.

> Resistance here; rebellion there; fierce endeavours to bring down France from her envied throne; different languages, literatures and philosophies all directed to the task of giving utterance to an upsurge of national feeling that gathers strength with every day that passes ....[3]

In Switzerland, one of France's cultural conquests, Rousseau was busy carrying out the resistance Hazard describes; and in the Scandinavian countries men like Syv, Reenberg, Fasting, and Abrahamson made up vernacular revivals which mark obvious parallels with the one in Scotland.[4]

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1. (Glasgow 1751) 28-9. Cf. the following chapter title (Chap. XXXVII) from a very influential work on taste: "That the words of our own native language make a greater impression upon us, than those of a foreign tongue". Abbe Du Bos Critical Reflections On Poetry, Painting, and Music, trans. by T. Nugent (3 vols, London 1748) I.
2. See Wade Voltaire, 164, 206; Wellek Modern Criticism, I, 75.
3. European Thought In The Eighteenth Century: From Montesquieu to Lessing, transl. by J. Lewis May (London 1954) 465.
4. See especially Hustvedt Ballad Criticism for a comprehensive discussion of the Scandinavian revivals. It is worth noticing here that Rousseau opposed the 1707 Union of Scotland and England on these grounds, and said so to Boswell. See Boswell On The Grand Tour: Germany and Switzerland 1764, edit. by F.A. Pottle (New York 1953) 218, 224.

In England and Scotland historical mindedness led to the formation of a school of British Historicist Criticism. At the end of the seventeenth century, the seeds of it existed in Sir William Temple's concept of national 'humour', the oddity and eccentricity of a country which he found desirable to cultivate.[1] By the time of Edward Young's Conjectures On Original Composition (1759) Temple's notion had reached full fruition; for Young's Conjectures was one of the chief manifestos of historicist criticism. His main point, discussed in relation to the old Ancient versus Modern controversy, is that a modern poet should not imitate either his predecessors or contemporaries abroad if he is to equal the achievement of the Ancients. If he does so, he merely provides lesser duplicates of past models, or transplants the laurels of his nation on foreign soil. 'Inventive genius', he protests, 'may safely stay at home'; for a genuine poet, like Shakespeare, uses his own 'native powers'; writes in his own tongue and relies upon his own 'knowledge innate'.[2] Goldsmith, who was of the same mind, enunciated a system of historicist criticism in An Enquiry Into The Present State Of Polite Learning In Europe (1759), in part a linguistic survey of Europe. In the survey Goldsmith criticises the polite learning of Holland for lacking national character, borrowing its taste from neighbouring nations and its language from France; and blames Germany for the same faults.[3] He is not xenophobic

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1. See Observations Upon The United Provinces Of The Netherlands (8th edit. Edinburgh 1747) 113-14. See also "Of Poetry" in Five Miscellaneous Essays by Sir William Temple, edit. by Samuel H. Monk (Ann Arbor 1963) 198-99.

2. Edit. by Edith J. Morley (Facsimile 2nd edit. London 1759, Manchester 1918) 7-11, 14-15, 17, 20.

3. In Collected Works Of Oliver Goldsmith, edit. by Arthur Friedman (5 vols, Oxford 1966) I, 278, 282.

in that he supports the Berlin Academy's inclusion of foreigners; but is, rather, uneasy lest the adoption of the French language leave it 'artificially supported' and destined to failure. For success in polite learning, Goldsmith assumes, having digested his Montesquieu and Voltaire, depends upon a national language formed out of the manners of the nation.[1] Subsequently, of all the nations he examines, Sweden wins his applause. Unlike the others it attempts polite learning in the native tongue, a rude, Scots-like vernacular, alluring for a man of primitivist leanings as well.[2] Goldsmith's comments on poetry and literary criticism resemble those on polite learning and language. Success in poetry, he says, depends too upon a flourishing vernacular encouraged by criticism; that is, a 'national system of criticism', whose rules accommodate 'the genius and temper' of the nation it wishes to refine.[3] It is no coincidence that Goldsmith, whose education was typically Scottish, Edinburgh followed by Leiden, should have held these critical opinions. Scotland had, as we saw earlier, a long, unbroken tradition of historicist criticism from the sixteenth century, and it was not to be left without an exponent in the eighteenth. Thomas Blackwell, who was associated with Aberdeen University from 1718-1757 as a student, professor, and principal, notably at a time when many vernacular figures were under that university's influence,

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1. An Enquiry, I, 281, 304. Goldsmith was no doubt influenced too by the English grammarians and linguists who anticipated his historicist statements on language. See for example James Harris Hermes (Scolar Press Facsimile of London 1751, edit. Menston 1968) 407; Robert Lowth Lectures On The Sacred Poetry Of The Hebrews (1753), transl. from Latin by G. Gregory (2 vols, London 1787), I, 101.

2. An Enquiry, I, 283. Goldsmith is not exceptional in his partiality for northern tongues. On the idealisation of northern peoples see also Montesquieu Spirit of Laws, I, 160, 294, 346, 353.

3. An Enquiry, I, 287, 294-97.

was that man. He produced An Enquiry Into The Life And Writings Of Homer (London 1735), a work that, in its popularity throughout Britain, necessarily influenced Goldsmith a good deal. Indeed, it reads like Young and Goldsmith with a strong colouring of Montesquieu and Voltaire mixed in. Blackwell begins with climate and its effect upon national manners, and advances, much as the others, a theory of national genius; the necessity of the modern poet, who would equal Homer's achievement, 'to adapt his Inventions to the State and Temper of his Age and Nation'. In his theory of imitation, character and setting are to be taken from real life; and all things are to be represented exactly as they are, almost exactly as the poet hears 'them talked of', and in his own language and dialect.[1] His maxim for an original writer is

> That a Poet describes nothing so happily, as what he has seen; nor talks masterly, but in his native Language, and proper Idiom; nor mimicks truly other Manners, than those whose Originals he has practised and known.[2]

Like his Scottish predecessors, James VI or Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, Blackwell is somewhat defensive where dialects are concerned and seems to have an axe to grind with relation to English. Though he does not mention Scots specifically, he claims that a poet cannot excel in imitating another's way, 'tho' perhaps preferable both in Language and Gesture to his own'.[3] Another related point he makes, which harks back to the statements of the Scots antiquaries, is that 'a polished Language is not fit for a great Poet'; it interferes with the force of words and prevents true representation, thereby

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1. Blackwell Homer, 11-12, 32, 69, 111, 223, 278.
2. Blackwell Homer, 29.
3. Blackwell Homer, 30-1. Elsewhere he praises Greece for maintaining its language against the imposition of Latin - 46. Cf. also Ferguson Civil Society, 173-74.

descending to mere imitation.[1] Whether thinking of Scots or not, Blackwell's theories belong to a context of Scottish argument of which he was well aware, and must be taken as an implicit defence of his own language.

The effect of the historicist critics in England and Scotland is apparent in pastoral theory and poetry from the Pope - Philips controversy onwards, after which it moved away from neoclassical imitation and towards a more native practice. British pastoralism of the period should actually be regarded an another species of literary historicism. Its theorists, men like Tickell, Purney, even Johnson, to a degree, in England; A.F. Tytler, Aikin, and Blair in Scotland called for a rationalist pastoral upon differences which comprised historicist critical theories, those of climate, custom, and language.[2] Its poetic exemplars were men like Philips, Purney, and Gay, south of the border; Ramsay, Ross, Nicol, and Fergusson in the north.[3] Matthew McDiarmid is quite right when he sets eighteenth century Scots poetry against the wider background of the pastoral vogue in Britain.[4]

We must widen our horizontal a little more to reassess what the Scots vernacular poets said and to place it in its context. Naturally they took their lead from the antiquaries who promoted their

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1. Blackwell Homer, 56, 58-9.
2. See for example, Tickell Guardian No. 30 (2 vols, Glasgow 1746) I. For a full account of rationalist pastoral theory see Congleton Pastoral Poetry.
3. Such was the self-awareness of belonging to British pastoralism that it is often mentioned by the vernacular poets in their works. See for example Ramsay "Epistle To Mr. John Gay" in Works, II; or especially Francis Douglas The Birth-Day (Glasgow 1782) 10.
4. Robert Fergusson, I, 150-59. His work in general is the most well informed introduction to eighteenth century Scots literature.

movement; or, perhaps, as William Geddie believes, they acted with the antiquaries; they were two segments of the same movement.[1] One detects this in the way they, as the English and Scottish antiquaries had done for them, insinuated themselves into what had become the great, classic tradition of Middle Scots literature. The 'ancient' tongue, so often looked upon as a Theocritean doric, was deliberately equated with 'our present provincial dialects', and thus with the language of vernacular poetry.[2] It followed that Ramsay, who adopted the pseudonym Gawin Douglas in the Easy Club, and used it on the first poem he ever composed,[3] should prophesise his own coming 'twa Centries pas' to resurrect the poetry of the makars.[4] Beattie did as much for Ramsay in his dedication to Alexander Ross, listing 'Ramsay gay' among Douglas, James I, Montgomery, Dunbar, Scot, and Drummond. And Pennecuik, or a 'Friend', grouped himself with Drummond, Buchanan, Douglas, King James, and Crawford.[5] The Revivalist poets presented themselves to the literary world as neo-ancients, and, by all accounts of the literary historians and critics in Britain, were accepted as such.

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1. Middle Scots Poets, lxv-lxvi.
2. See for example Ross's "Advertisement" to Helenore, The Scottish Works of Alexander Ross, edit. by Margaret Wattie (STS, Edinburgh and London 1938) 4. I use the word deliberately, as, despite assertions to the contrary, the distinction between Middle Scots and vernacular Scots was known. See Hailes Ancient Scottish Poems (Edinburgh 1770).
3. "A Poem To the Memory of the Famous Archibald Pitcairn, M.D." (discovered by myself in the Edinburgh Room at the Edinburgh Central Public Library). See F.W. Freeman and Alexander Law "Allan Ramsay's first published poem: the poem to the memory of Dr. Archibald Pitcairne", The Bibliotheck, IX (1979) 153-60.
4. "Postscript" (l.3) to Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris" in Ramsay Works, III, 97.
5. "To My honour'd Friend Dr. P___k", Alexander Pennecuik, Gent. Streams from Helicon (2nd edit., Edinburgh 1720) pp.61-2.

Philosophically, it behoved them to be primitivists; to follow the example of Rousseau, and equate their rustics with the forefathers of a lost golden past. One finds this in the poets' dedications which usually begin with the equation, obviously meant as an implied philosophical justification of what is to follow. We see this at work in Ramsay's dedication to A Collection of Scots Proverbs, where his Scots farmers are 'the Storekeepers of Heaven's Bountiths', and identified with the 'Spirit of their bauld Forbears'; in Hamilton of Bangour's dedication to The Gentle Shepherd which prepares the reader for a drama on the 'Innocence the World has lost' (l.144), inspired by the 'home-bred Muse' clad 'In ancient Garb'; or in Ross's prefatory observations to Helenore on the 'innocent simplicity and honest meaning, among the lower ranks of people in remote parts of the country', the subjects of his pastoral.[1] Sometimes, as in Fergusson's "CALLER WATER", the poet transforms the Scottish landscape into Eden and Scottish rustics into its occupants.[2] The Revivalists' defence of their language and poetry also owed much to Rousseau, or, perhaps, to French pastoralists, like St Lambert, who endowed his peasants with a natural poetic sense. The Scots poets made it clear that theirs was an untaught, north country language of poetry. In a footnote to "Fable XVI", Dr William Wilkie, teacher and close friend of Robert Fergusson, would have his readers believe that his Scottish peasants, from whom he borrows the language of his fable, unconsciously speak natural poetry.

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1. Ramsay, Works, II, 211, V, 62; Ross Works, 3.
2. Significantly, in support of the Gaelic Revival, a parallel movement in Scotland, the poet Alexander MacDonald has Adam and Eve speaking Gaelic in his defence of the language. "The Resurrection of the Old Scottish Tongue", The Poems of Alexander MacDonald, edit. and transl. by Rev. A. MacDonald (Inverness 1924) 5.

> Thinkin) Thinking. When polysyllables terminate in ing, the Scotch almost always neglect the g, which softens the sound. ...Thristle) Thistle. The Scotch, though they commonly affect soft sounds, and throw out consonants and take in vowels in order to obtain them, yet in some cases, of which this is an example, they do the very reverse: and bring in superfluous consonants to roughen the sound, when such sounds are more agreeable to the roughness of the thing represented.[1]

And David Herd prefaces his Ancient And Modern Scottish Songs with the assumption about Scotland that

> ... the romantic face of the country, and the vacant pastoral life of a great part of its inhabitants; (are) circumstances, no doubt, highly favourable to poetry and song.[2]

It was in keeping with this that from Ramsay onwards vernacular poets assumed unlettered, rural personae. They sold themselves to the literary world as heaven taught ploughmen, who 'only copied from Nature'; who had only to invoke the hamely muse and have before them 'All nature's stores in their pure artless bed'.[3] This was primitivism with a practical motive in mind.

Like Temple, Young, and Goldsmith in England; Blackwell in Scotland; Montesquieu and Voltaire in France, they were historicists and, in their awareness of these and other writers, not narrow nationalists. No question but that David Herd, for example, Scots antiquary and ballad collector, friend and fellow member of the Cape Club with Fergusson, had digested his Voltaire thoroughly before writing his prefatory defence of Scots song in the Ancient And Modern Scottish Songs. 'Every nation', he says,

> at least every ancient and unmixed nation, hath its peculiar style of musical expression, its peculiar mode of melody; modulated by the joint influence of climate and government, character and situation, as well as by the formation of

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1. Fables (London 1768) 122-23.
2. (reprint 1776, 2 vols, Edinburgh and London 1973) I, X.
3. Ramsay "Preface" (1721) Works, I, XX; Ross The Fortunate Shepherd (1.93) Works, 174.

> the organs. Thus each of the states of Greece had its characteristic style of music, the Doric, the Phrygian, the Lydian mood, etc., and thus the moderns have their distinct national styles, the Italian, the Spanish, the Irish, and the Scottish.[1]

What is more he goes on to say that the topography and life style of Scotland are particularly favourable to the 'peculiar genius and spirit' of its poetry and song.[2] For the vernacular poet, who often expressed himself in the same terms, the inferences were obvious; The onus was on the bard to compose a national literature.

> As many as the stars that gild the sky,
> As many as the flow'rs that paint the ground,
> In number like the insect tribes that fly,
> The various forms of beauty are found ...
>
> Therefore each bard should freely entertain
> The hints which pleasing fancy gives at will ...[3]

Ramsay, for instance, was acutely aware of the literary forces of the moment when he prefaced his first anthology of poetry (1721) with the maxim, 'Pursue your own natural Manner, and be an Original', and quoted from Dr Young on the title page of his second anthology (1728).[4] The poets, then, were not, as is often claimed, xenophobic; or backward looking narrow nationalists.[5] They were indeed exemplars of a school of historicist criticism that was Scottish, British, and European. Anyone who doubts this assertion might look at a poem by a minor figure of the Revival: Alexander Nicol, a self-educated

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1. Herd Scottish Songs, I, ix-x.
2. Herd Scottish Songs, I, x-xi.
3. Dr William Wilkie "A Dream", The Epigoniad ... To which is Added, A Dream, In the Manner of Spenser (2nd edit., London 1759) p. 224.
4. Ramsay Works, I, xviii, II, xiii.
5. Yet another paper perpetuates these misguided notions in its own limited handling of the subject. Ian Ross and Stephen Scobie "Patriotic Publishing as a Response to the Union", The Union Of 1707: Its Impact on Scotland, edit. by T.I. Rae (Glasgow and London 1974).

packman turned schoolmaster, in Collace. Nicol's "Epistle to Mr. P___, one of his Majesty's Officers of Excise, on ridiculing my Verses" demonstrates the extent to which literary historicism pervaded the Vernacular Revival, and influenced the most remote of its contributors. For the "Epistle", a forty-three line defence of his poetry, is a neat recapitulation of Blackwell's Homer, the main argument being that

> Though you who have poetic art survey'd,
> The Latin tongue, and many authors read,
> Compose fine numbers in heroic style;
> 'Tis but mere imitation all the while.
> But new invention, such as Homer had,
> And in their mother-tongue, as Horace did:
> Purely they wrote, each as dame Nature taught;
> Their works new wit, new fancy, and new thought.[1]

In Fergusson's words, decrying the English elocutionists, it was not a matter of xenophobia but of 'Throwing such barriers in the way / Of those who genius display ("A TALE", ll.9-10). The imposition of English language or, for that matter, French and Italian song, threatened to stifle the Scottish genius.[2] There is admittedly a paradox here: Scots poets looking outward to Europe for the support of a national cause. Yet it is undoubtedly correct to say that in their provincial activities they were, as Paul Hazard concedes, very European indeed.[3]

One naturally wonders why the men of the Scots Vernacular Revival were so attuned to the philosophical and literary opinions coming from across the English Channel. In the first place

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1. Poems On Several Subjects (Edinburgh 1766) p. 53.
2. It was generally allowed by the Revivalists that English and other foreign traditions had a place in Scotland, but not to the exclusion of the national culture. See for example Ramsay "Preface" to The Evergreen, Works, IV, 237.
3. See The European Mind (1680-1715), transl. by J. Lewis May (London 1953) 388-89.

eighteenth century Scotland as a whole enjoyed its closest association with the Continent, to a degree that necessarily affected literary and antiquarian thought.[1] But more than this, there was a European mindedness among the Revivalists which saw Scotland as a nation of Europe.[2] This was due to many factors: a long past history of continental alliances; educational ties; and the Scot's natural propensity to travel and, occasionally, to settle abroad.

Certainly the educational ties were very strong and very important; insularity was not a symptom of whatever was taking place during the early Revival. Ramsay and Ruddiman's close friends, Dr Archibald Pitcairne and Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, spent many fruitful years abroad studying at Paris and Leiden, respectively; and in the case of Pitcairne taking a professorial chair of Physic at Leiden. Both Clerk of Penicuik and Hamilton of Bangour had several years of the Grand Tour. One of the unforeseen benefits of Bangour's banishment as a Jacobite was, as it was for several others, years of further living abroad, in Sweden, Paris, Rouen, and Boulogne, and the exposure that goes with it. There were other educational ties, such as the Scots colleges on the Continent, which were normal stopping places for those on the Grand Tour. But members of the college themselves returned to Scotland and constituted a different type of Scottish Continental influence. One such influential member from the Scots College at Paris was Dr Alexander Geddes, antiquary, scholar, linguist, and vernacular poet. Geddes who had studied at Navarre and the Sorbonne, where he refused the offer of a post, returned to Scotland in 1764.

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1. See especially P. Hume Brown "Intellectual Influences Of Scotland On The Continent", Surveys Of Scottish History (Glasgow 1919) 131; H.W. Meikle "Voltaire and Scotland", Etudes Anglaises, XIe (1958) 193.

2. For example Ramsay "Answer I" (11.55-60) Works, I, 120.

His achievements were rewarded with an honorary doctorate from Aberdeen some years later. Incidentally, the European connection made the Scots more aware of other battles for the vernacular, where they usually sided with the underdog.[1] In Scotland itself it was the universities that brought the men of the Revival into the sphere of contemporary European thought. For the Scottish universities, which provided the educational backgrounds and the lifetime affiliations of the printers, poets, and antiquaries, were imbued with Continental Philosophy. Montesquieu and Voltaire were in fact part of the set lectures, and the lecturers themselves actively debated over the works of the philosophers in their clubs and societies.[2]

Unlettered - the Revivalists were not. A cross-section of the university educated includes the printers and antiquaries, Clerk of Penicuik, Robert Freebairn, James Watson, and Thomas Ruddiman; and the poets, Fergusson, Ross, Skinner, and Robert Forbes. Most of these men were M.A. though it was common in those days not to

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1. For example, Boswell and Clerk of Penicuik defended the Dutch language while in Holland; Smollett in Nice angrily sought in vain 'some pieces in the antient Provencal'; Dr John Moore, friend of Burns, remonstrated at the treatment of German as a 'vulgar and provincial dialect' during a stay in Germany. Boswell In Holland, 109, 133; Memoirs Of The Life Of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet, edit. by John M. Gray (SHS, Edinburgh 1892) 16, 36; Smollett Travels Through France And Italy (2 vols, London 1766) I, 334-35; Moore A View Of Society And Manners In France, Switzerland, And Germany (2 vols, London 1779) I, 426-28.

2. See John Lough "L'Esprit Des Lois In A Scottish University In The Eighteenth Century", Comparative Literature Studies, XIII (1944) 13, 16; "The Relations Of The Aberdeen Philosophical Society (1758-73) With France", The Aberdeen University Review, XXX, (1942-44) 146; Meikle "Voltaire and Scotland", 200. Outside the universities French Philosophy was unusually popular in Scotland. With 19 editions of Montesquieu's works, 11 of Rousseau's, 50 of Voltaire's, published before 1801, a large percentage of the population read it. See A.K. Howard "Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau In Eighteenth Century Scotland ...", Bibliotheck, II (1959) 40-63.

finish the degree course. Few members of the Revival had not attended university, and they were to a man avid self-educators. Ramsay is the most striking example. The founder of Britain's first circulating library, a charter member of the Academy of St Luke, a man of wide reading, he ran a book shop that was the rendezvous of the Edinburgh wits. Pitcairne, Clerk of Penicuik, Ruddiman, Professor John Ker, James Thomson and David Mallet were numbered among his friends. And friendships in this, as in all instances must be taken into account. Surely it is worth our attention that Alexander Ross was published under the auspices of James Beattie, who lectured on Montesquieu in Aberdeen, wrote about Voltaire, and led debates at the Aberdeen Philosophical Society on Rousseau; and Robert Fergusson was edited by his friend Arthur Masson, who carried recommendatory certificates from Diderot and Alembert.

It is similarly enlightening to look among the books in the library of David Herd, a not untypical figure of the movement. Judging from his books, he had an extensive knowledge of classical literature, travel literature, English and Scottish history, theology, linguistics, philosophy, and world literature. Grotius, Machiavel, Puffendorf, Voltaire, and Montesquieu are a few of the authors in his collection of continental works.[1] Furthermore, it is enlightening to look at the following books by members of the circle of vernacular writers, publishers, and friends; an edition of Montesquieu's The Spirit of Laws by Thomas Ruddiman; Voltaire's The History Of The Misfortunes Of John Calas by Peter Williamson, tavern keeper and associate of Robert Fergusson; Martin and Witherspoon's - Cape Club members and Herd's

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1. See Catalogue Of A Valuable Collection Of Books ... Which Belonged To The Late David Herd, Writer, Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1810).

publishers - projected publication of The Works of Voltaire; The Sentimental Sailor (Edinburgh 1772) by Thomas Mercer, Cape Club member and friend of Fergusson, with a dedication

> To John James Rousseau, Whose Writings Are An Honour, Whose Misfortunes, A Shame to Europe; Whom Posterity Will Amply Compensate For The Injuries Of His Co-Temporaries; Whom Geneva Had Once The Honour To Account Her Citizen; The Following Poem, (In Gratitude For Pleasure Received From the Perusal Of His Works)

and The Poetical Works Of The Ingenious and Learned William Meston (Edinburgh 1767), sometime Professor of Philosophy at Marischal College, minor vernacular poet who attracted the attentions of, and was published by, the Ruddimans, with a dedication

> To
> Mess. Courayer and Voltaire.

This and more was published by people allegedly opposed to, and unaffected by, the European Enlightenment.

There is yet another very significant approach to the question of the Revivalists' susceptibility to the philosophical and literary circumstances, somehow obfuscated by the historians. Douglas, James VI, Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, Pitcairne, Colvil, Watson (and most of the Choice Collection), the Ruddimans, the Tytlers, Mrs Cockburn, Meston, Claudero, Nicol, Fergusson, Skinner, Geddes, Lady Nairne, and the others had one obvious characteristic in common: they were all Christian humanists in their Weltanschauung;[1] almost to a man Episcopalians or Catholics, and thereby members of what had become by the eighteenth century a submerged and oppressed Scottish culture. They were part of that other Scots culture which had seen the first stirrings of the Enlightenment in Scotland with J. Ogilvie's translation

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1. I follow closely the definition of the humanist put forward by Paul Fussell in The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism (Oxford 1965).

of Giannone, a work that had influenced Montesquieu and Gibbon, and had continued to make contributions to the intellectual life of Europe with the writings of Catholic and Episcopal Jacobites, Sir Robert Sibbald, Thomas Ruddiman, Pitcairne, Arbuthnot, Thomas Innes, and the Chevalier Ramsay.[1] Old St Paul's, that Jacobite stronghold in Edinburgh, was the spiritual and cultural home of most of these men and of vernacular Revivalists like Watson, the Ruddimans, and the Tytlers.[2]

We must note parenthetically that despite the pleas of his brother Hary to attend the Church of Scotland,[3] and a short period of acute religious gloom among the anti-Burghers, at the height of his madness,[4] Fergusson appears not to have been a regular member of any church. He was, indeed, as his biographers have noted, a deist.[5] Nonetheless, because of his Northeast Episcopal outlook,[6] his education at St Andrews University, his close ties with the Ruddimans and their circle, his fervid adherence to the Jacobite cause,

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1. See Hugh Trevor-Roper "The Scottish Enlightenment", Studies On Voltaire And The Eighteenth Century, XXVII (1963) 1635-1658.

2. See Mary E. Ingram A Jacobite Stronghold Of The Church (Edinburgh 1907).

3. In a letter to the poet, dated 8th October 1773, Hary not only acknowledges his own attendance of the Anglican Church but implies that Fergusson most probably was an avowed Episcopalian at that time. 'I hope you'll ... appear at least once every Sunday in church (I mean the Church of Scotland) for how can you spend your time better? I was, like many, fond of the Church of England's forms, &c. &c., but having been in many Romish Churches since, find these forms are merely the ... of laziness, and differ but very little from one another ...'. "XII. (LETTER OF HARY FERGUSSON TO ROBERT FERGUSSON), quoted in McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, I, 98.

4. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, I, 71-74.

5. See for example, William E. Gillis, Jr Auld Reikie's Laureate: Robert Fergusson, A critical Biography (unpublished Edinburgh University Ph.D. dissertation, 1955) 91.

6. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 107-110", 300.

he was very much a part of the Episcopal subculture of Scotland. In certain respects, though it would be a mistake to take the comparison too far, he was, like Boswell, a man tormented by a morose Calvinist conscience while wholly considering himself a Tory - if we substitute Episcopal Church for 'church of England' - as Johnson defined one in his dictionary.

> TORY - ... One who adheres to the antient constitution of the state, and apostolical hierarchy of the church of England.[1]

What is manifest, as we shall see in analysing the allusions and references, the themes and rhetorical devices of his poetry, is that Fergusson wrote clearly in the Episcopal (and Catholic) tradition, though humanism is the larger rubric under which to place the tradition in which he composed.

Of all the characteristics of humanist thinking, the tendency to construct hierarchical models is most outstanding and most pertinent here. In their construct of the universe everything had its proper place and was held there through an exact balance of opposites: the 'great Steppes' linked together with a 'golden Chaine', harmoniously ordered through a symmetrical motion of contraries, advancing 'in a measur'd Dance':[2] in short, a cosmos both ordered and diverse. Concordia Discors was for them the way of the world. Hence their religious and political writings emphasise a social hierarchy from the king downwards, neatly balanced and, to a degree, checked by

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1. A Dictionary Of The English Language (2 vols, London 1755) II.
2. See Drummond of Hawthornden "An Hymne Of The Fairest Faire" (11.83-94), in William Drummond of Hawthornden Poems and Prose, edit. by Robert H. MacDonald (Edinburgh and London 1976) 117-26.

his subordinates.[1] In their view of the world's nations, order and diversity meant not so much an order of greater and lesser cultures, though they had their biases, but a sense of legitimate cultural differences which enhanced, without disrupting, a general state of human nature.[2] Historicism was divinely sanctioned. Order was retained in the idea of an essentially fixed human condition poised against a more fluid concept of national uniqueness. In this facet of the humanist outlook was held a keen sense of historical continuity within one's nation, and a steadfast regard for the country's past - the forefathers' collective wisdom - over sudden innovations; overall, a cultural conservatism.[3]

Pride in the national language and literature was a great part of just such conservatism. The most glaring illustration we find of this in Scotland, and the most important in tracing this source of the Vernacular Revival, is the Catholic and Episcopal reaction to the Reformation. Just as these religious groups shunned what they perceived as the wrenching innovations of Knox, they reacted against the Presbyterians' increasing use of English in their writing and partiality to it under the influence of the English bible and

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1. See Especially D.H. Whiteford Reactions To Jacobitism in Scottish Ecclesiastical Life And Thought 1690-1760 (unpublished Edinburgh University Ph. D. dissertation 1965) 21-2, 30, 99; Isabel Rivers The Poetry of Conservatism 1600-1745 (Cambridge 1973) 6-7, 56; Thomas I. Rae "The historical writing of Drummond of Hawthornden", The Scottish Historical Review, LIV (1975) 39-42.

2. See particularly The Works Of ... Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, edit. by James Watson (2 vols, Edinburgh 1716-22) II, 278, 394, 648.

3. For examples see Whiteford Reactions to Jacobitism, 99; William Drummond of Hawthornden The History of Scotland, From the Year 1423 to the Year 1542 (Glasgow 1749) 298; Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Works, II, 356, 379, 517.

Knox's English affiliations.[1] In their eyes Knox and his associates, who thought of Scotland and England as one nation and saw no fundamental differences in their respective laws and languages,[2] had betrayed their national heritage. Witness the Catholic resistance to the Presbyterian abandonment of Scots in the closing protest of John Hamilton's Ane Catholik And Facile Traictise (1581) -

> Giff king James the fyft var alyue, quha hering ane of his subiectis knap suddrone, declarit him ane trateur: quhidder vald he declaire you triple traitoris, quha not onlie knappis suddrone in your negatiue confession, bot also hes causit it be imprentit at London in contempt of our natiue langage?[3]

- and Ninian Winzet's barbed jibe at Knox

> Gif ze throw curio sitie of novationis,
> hes forzet our plane Scottish quhilk zour
> mother ler it zou ... I sall wryte to
> zou my mynd in Latin, for I am
> nocht acquyntit with zour Southeroun.[4]

For the Scots humanist the vernacular was now the language of the minority; in a sense, the language of exile which he clung to like the Yiddish-speaking Jew, in a 'desperate effort to sustain the values and the languages of his history'.[5] Scots literature was likewise maintained by these minority parties right up to the Revival, especially by the seventeenth century Royalists, like the Sempills and Samuel

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1. See Catholic Tractates Of The Sixteenth Century 1573-1600, edit. by Thomas G. Law (STS, Edinburgh and London 1901) vii; M.A. Bald "The Pioneers of Anglicised Speech in Scotland", Scottish Historical Review, XXIV (1927) 182-84.
2. See Arthur H. Williamson Scottish National Consciousness in the age of James VI (Edinburgh 1979) 151.
3. Law Catholic Tractates, 105.
4. "TO IOHNE KNOX", CERTAIN TRACTATES (2 vols, STS, Edinburgh and London 1888-90) I, 138.
5. It strikes me that the modern Yiddish novelist's defence of Yiddish runs exactly parallel to the early Revivalists' pleas for Scots. See Issac Bashevis Singer "Yiddish, the Language of Exile", in Next Year In Jerusalem, edit. by Douglas Villiers (London 1976) 62.

Colvil, and the Latinists, like Pitcairne and Ruddiman, who held the good Renaissance ideal of bringing the vernacular up to the standard of the greatest Latin models.[1] It was this diehard humanist outlook that led the Revivalists back to the Renaissance poet Bishop Gavin Douglas - to the values implied in his translating the Aeneid into Scots - and forward to the philosophy of Montesquieu and Rousseau that fitted so naturally into their scheme of things.

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1. See George Elder Davie The Democratic Intellect (2nd edit., Edinburgh 1961) 214-15.

CHAPTER 2

FERGUSSON, THE SCOTTISH HUMANIST

We have said that the Vernacular Revival belongs to a long standing debate on the relationship of language and literature to theories of history and national genius, and to various eighteenth century notions regarding primitive peoples. Furthermore, we have seen how the Scottish Royalists held ideas that naturally brought them into the debate, and led them to perpetuate these theories and notions. It is now time to examine Fergusson's outlook and his poetry in relation to the Royalists' humanism, the spirit of the early Revival.

Fergusson possessed three salient characteristics that typified the men of the early Revival: he was a man of classical learning, a traditionalist, and a Tory. He was, his friend and earliest editor, Walter Ruddiman, notes, proficient at his Latin studies[1] which had begun formally at the age of six and continued quite concentratedly through his study at the Royal High School in Edinburgh, Dundee Grammar School and St Andrews University.[2] This Latin scholarship, often mentioned by the early biographers, served the poet as it had the great Scots Makars; it provided literary models for imitation, though not slavish imitation, which the Scots humanist always deplored, and a sound basis for the enrichment of the vernacular. As with that influential Makar, Gavin Douglas, to whom the early Revivalists looked for inspiration, and favoured with a painstaking edition of 1710, Fergusson was in one sense a vernacular classicist; Douglas

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1. Poems On Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson (2 parts, Edinburgh 1778-79) Part II, iii.

2. For information on the curriculum the poet followed, see McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, I, 12-14; Alexander Law Education In Edinburgh In The Eighteenth Century (London 1965) 74-81; Douglas Young "The Making of a Poet: Some Notes On Fergusson's Educational Background", Robert Fergusson 1750-1774: Essays By Various Hands, edit. by Sydney G. Smith (Edinburgh 1952) 75-83.

had written his Aeneis; the young poet had planned his own translation of the Georgics.[1] Moreover, several of the town poems are written in the tradition of Juvenal's Third Satire, and the influence of Horace and Virgil, and the Scottish Latinists, is apparent and asknowledged, often in the subtitles or mottos, in the country works.[2] It is not, however, so much the direct influence of specific classical works that concerns us as the classical cultural ideals and values behind Fergusson's poetry: as, for example, as Professor Daiches once described it in a public lecture, the gravitas in "BRAID CLAITH". Fergusson, indeed, with his friends and editors, whose projects similarly exhibited a blend of Latinism and vernacular poetry,[3] helped keep alive the old Scottish Latinist culture of Johnston, Buchanan, Wedderburn, and Leech, while promoting the genuinely classical vernacular of Douglas's Aeneis. When Walter Ruddiman says that the poet 'would have revived our antient Caledonian Poetry, of late so much

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1. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, I, 34.

2. Generally speaking ignorance of Latin has little to do with the Vernacular Revival. Literary historians have been led astray by Ramsay's avowed ignorance of Latin in his 1721 "Preface" to the Poems. But what are the facts? Watson's Choice Collection, the first major publication of the Revival, brings together Scots and Latin poems, and those who carry the torch after it, William Meston, Alexander Ross, Claudero, Robert Forbes, and Fergusson, to mention a few, are all, to varying degrees, vernacular poets and Latinists.

3. The Ruddimans are the prime example with their numerous editions of classical authors; Scottish Latinists, like Buchanan, William Lauder and others; and vernacular poets, Meston and Fergusson, to mention two of the most important figures of the Revival. George E. Davie is the only scholar, to my knowledge, who has fully appreciated the relationship between Scottish Latinism and Scots poetry of the eighteenth century. He says, 'There is a definite linkage between the Humanist legacy and the vernacular movement, in the sense that those scholars who did most to preserve the prestige of Buchanan as a classic text for Latin classes in Scotland were also the same men who did most to encourage the idea of the Scottish tongue as being as suitable a vehicle for classic poetry as any other modern language'. Davie The Democratic Intellect, 214. See also 215, 217-18, 221.

neglected or despised'[1] he means that he was the most eligible successor to Douglas; and, as a man who brought together the two elements of Scottish traditional culture, the artist best equipped to carry on the humanist poetic tradition in Scotland. St Andrews, it must be added, had given him more than just a comprehensive education in Latin: it had provided him with at least the living memory of the great Scots poets who had preceded him there as students, Dunbar, Douglas, and Lyndsay, while yet, in the 1760's, offering an environment conducive to the vernacular interests of the poet, his lecturers, friends and fellow students, Dr William Wilkie, Henry Erskine (Lord Buchan), founder of the Antiquarian Society, and Andrew Erskine, most notably.[2] Above all, St Andrews had been, in its not so distant past, the educational home of Royalists like Sir Thomas Craig, Graham of Claverhouse, Simon Fraser of Lovat; it had an infamous reputation for sedition, not easily forgotten after two recent Jacobite rebellions, and had suffered several purges in consequence; it was, along with the universities of Aberdeen, one of the last diehard bastions of Scottish Toryism.[3] It was here that the poet discovered his artistic vocation; here that he began as a national poet, composing two acts of Wallace and various Scots poems; here that Fergusson, like his most immediate predecessors, James Philips, author of The Grameid, an anti-Presbyterian satire composed in Latin (left in Ruddiman's keeping in the Advocates Library), John Arbuthnot, and Alexander

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1. Ruddiman Robert Fergusson, Part II, iv.
2. Wilkie and the Erskines' interests in vernacular Scots are better known than those of Dr Andrew Duncan, the poet's friend, who attended him in his fatal illness. Duncan was also a keen Latinist and a bit of a vernacular poet. See his Miscellaneous Poems (Edinburgh 1818).
3. See Ronald G. Cant The University Of St. Andrews: A Short History (revised edit., Edinburgh and London 1970) 78-9, 86-7.

Robertson of Struan, began as a poet of Scottish Toryism; chiefly as a Tory satirist.[1] St Andrews, with its older, in some respects, pre-Reformation character, strengthened traditionalist outlooks that the poet had imbibed from an early age, and, in so doing, married his interests securely with those of the early Revivalists.

Here, then, was a poet - the exact Scottish counterpart of the English and Irish humanists, Pope and Swift - with the crucial ingredients of the early eighteenth century Scots humanists; and a worthy follower of their interests and activities. They had been active publishers as well as learned scholars and editors of Latin works and Scots vernacular literature; as complementary activities they printed works on Scots law, which, with its strong Roman connection, underlined their Scots - Latin cultural emphasis; they published studies of Scottish history; and published and introduced a number of works which reflected their political, religious, historical, and literary biases: the most prominent being Drummond of Hawthornden's Works (Watson 1711), Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh's Works (Watson 1716-22), Robert Keith's The History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland (Ruddiman 1734), James Garden's Comparative Theology (Ruddiman 1735), Henry Scougall's The Life of God in the Soul of Man (Ruddiman 1739), Watson's Choice Collection Of Comic and Serious Poems (1706-11), Samuel Colvil's Mock Poem: Or Whiggs Supplication (Watson 1711), Gavin Douglas's Aeneis (Freebairn 1710), William Meston's Works (Ruddiman 1767), and, of course, Robert Fergusson's Poems (Ruddiman 1778-79). Many of these publications were joint Ruddiman - Watson - Freebairn projects.

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1. It will become clear later that the early "Elegy, On the Death of Mr. David Gregory" began the poet's career as a Tory satirist.

These publications constitute an important body of Scots humanist literature in the eighteenth century. They are a useful frame of reference against which to place Fergusson's poetry, and make it easier to see why the poet was for Walter Ruddiman the culminating figure of the early Revival, and how he gives expression to its ideals in his art. Fergusson's poetry is very consistent; the same themes are repeated; the rhetoric follows a consistent train of thought. This consistency actually makes it possible to set down his preoccupations into a list of general postulates characteristic of eighteenth century Scots humanist thought.

1. Much of Fergusson's poetry is about order in society, the absence of it in modern society and an ideal state of order, generally associated with the past. Such, for example, are the poems which deal with the disintegrating social structure in the country, particularly with the laird's abandonment of his dependent tenants for the lure of the city and a newfound vocation among the legal classes: poems like "On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET" which in its very title suggests the out of order. Philosophically the poems assume, then, the necessity of maintaining the traditional social structure and hierarchy where each rank is compensated according to its needs, and each rank fulfils its divinely ordained role:[1] the king, courtiers, and merchants in the town; the laird, like Butterfly, and his tenants in the country. This is the 'Order of Nature which God has established' - or concordia discors applied to society - and is

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1. See Mackenzie of Rosehaugh How to be Happy. Treated in Four Essays, in Works, I, 104; and other humanist poets like Alexander Robertson of Struan Poems On Various Subjects and Occasions (Edinburgh 1757) 346; Alexander Pope "AN ESSAY ON MAN" - "EPISTLE I", 11.179-184; "EPISTLE IV", 11.49-64, The Poems Of Alexander Pope, edit. by John Butt (London 1968). All quotations from Pope follow this edition.

to be preserved at virtually all costs lest the necessary balance be upset.[1] In the words of Pope,

> 'Till jarring int'rests of themselves create
> Th'according music of a well-mix'd State.
> Such is the World's great harmony, that springs
> From Order, Union, full Consent of things!
> ("AN ESSAY ON MAN", III, ll.293-296)

Hence, a prevailing concern of the humanist is for obedience and subordination. If he regrets the irresponsibility of the upper class butterflies, he is especially averse to rebellion among the lower ranks of society who throughout history threatened its superstructure.[2] Rebellion and chaos were for the Scots humanist particularly taboo: they recalled the overthrow of the Stuarts; the advent of the Presbyterian Kirk's supremacy, which abolished the old hierarchy of the church in favour of mob rule; the desecration and destruction of pre-Reformation churches; the rise of the mercantile classes and attendant weakening of the old aristocracy; the breaking of the age old, almost feudal, laird-tenant relationship; the growth of a more urban society, money grubbing, overcrowded, diseased and poor, in a more urban sense; the emergence of the mob, an insufferable 'monster ... a mass of ignorance, presumption, malice, and brutality ...'.[3] When the eighteenth century Scots humanist looked about him, he saw the symptoms of a rebellious and chaotic age in a socially fragmenting countryside and city. The city of chaos and disintegrating countryside were two poles of Fergusson's poetry, and easily recognised

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1. Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Jus Regium, Works, II, 459-60.
2. See especially Drummond of Hawthornden Irene, Works, edit. by James Watson, John Sage and Thomas Ruddiman (Edinburgh 1711) 169. For general background on the humanist's concern for subordination and obedience see Fussell Augustan Humanism, 33.
3. Tobias Smollett Humphry Clinker, edit. by Angus Ross (Harmondsworth 1973). All quotations from Humphry Clinker follow this edition.

literary places in Scots humanist literature. The dirt, disease and disorienting noise of "LEITH RACES" or "HALLOW-FAIR"; the changing countryside of "AN ECLOGUE" and "A DRINK ECLOGUE" belong, for example, to the literary world of Colvil's city of the Whigs ("Mock Poem: Or, Whiggs Supplication", pp.22-3) and to the transformed country in "The Speech of a Fife Laird, Newly come from the Grave" (Watson's Choice Collection, Pt I, ll.86-202).

2. The Scots humanist's concern for order in society entails a deep reverence for law; and, bearing in mind his views of the multiplicity of creation, naturally leads him to conceive of an ideal state of law for each nation,[1] and to plead against legal abuse in general. The following argument of Drummond of Hawthornden demonstrates just such prepossessions; it is from his Royalist political tract Irene, reminding us that, on the whole, the humanist legal ideal in Scotland was essentially Royalist.[2]

> What swayeth so many Men differing in Nations, Languages, Customs, Inclinations, Humours, and all in Arms, save Obedience? What obtaineth Victories, enlargeth Kingdoms, except Obedience? Where Laws are not obeyed, there is there no Fear; where that is wanting, there no Honour, no Respect is had of Virtue, no Punishment of Vice; and these taken away, nought shall be found but a disorderly Licence to do Evil, a Confusion of every Thing and a Total Ruine of the State.[3]

We know explicitly from poems like "The GHAISTS" (ll.125-26) or "LEITH RACES" (ll.145-53), for instance, that Fergusson's legal satires presuppose an ideal state of Stuart law in much the same fashion as

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1. This notion provides another reason for the Scots humanist's receptivity to the national concepts of law put forward by Montesquieu and the historicists.

2. For the application of law to the hereditary rights of the Stuarts see also Mackenzie of Rosehaugh A Defence of the Royal Line of Scotland or his Jus Regium, Works, II.

3. Drummond of Hawthornden, Works, 165.

did Pope's "Windsor Forest" (11.319-28), and belong to a definite genre of anti-Whig literature derived from Butler's Hudibras, one of the poet's favourite poems,[1] William Meston's "The Knight" and his "Mob contra Mob", and especially John Arbuthnot's History of John Bull. These poems attack the rise of legalism among the masses; the emergence of the legal 'battle'; the exchange of the laird for the town lawyer and absentee landlord; most emphatically, the acquisitiveness of the legal profession.[2] "The RISING of the SESSION", "The SITTING of the SESSION", and "MUTUAL COMPLAINT of Plainstanes and Causy" most obviously fall into this category.

3. Fergusson and the poets of the Vernacular Revival are said to be backward looking in their outlook. Continuous would be a more exact description; be it historical, political, or literary, their outlook emphasises continuity, the continuity of traditions. Nothing could have been further from their principles than the discontinuity of Scottish culture after the Reformation, the Revolution settlement of 1688, or the 1707 Union, where the major institutions of church and state, as well as literary and linguistic traditions, were obliterated.[3] Discontinuity naturally contributed to the strong propensity in the Scots humanist poet for the elegiac[4] though elegy,

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1. See Thomas Sommers The Life Of Robert Fergusson, The Scottish Poet (Edinburgh 1803) 4, 44. A quote from Butler's Hudibras in fact begins Fergusson's "FASHION. A POEM".

2. For example Arbuthnot John Bull, edit. by Alan W. Bower and Robert A. Erickson (facsimile London 1712, Oxford 1976) 61; Butler Hudibras (Scolar Press Facsimile repr., Menston 1970 of 3 parts, London 1663-78) "The Third Part - Canto III", pp.217-22; Meston The Knight, The Poetical Works (Edinburgh 1767) p.19.

3. For useful comments on the extent of the cultural break see William L. Mathieson Scotland And The Union (Glasgow 1905) 16; and Henry T. Buckle On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect, edit. by H.J. Hanham (Chicago and London 1970) 46, 53, 86-7.

4. This is a general characteristic of any humanist poet. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 6-7, 43, 293.

as he conceived of it, usually underlies 'elegiac action',[1] a call to reassert the national heritage. This propensity is especially strong in Fergusson. What should be noticed in "ELEGY, On the DEATH of SCOTS MUSIC", "The FARMER's INGLE", which pays homage to the wise forebears' outmoded way of life, and even "The GHAISTS", which reflects back to a more historically consistent Scotland, 'Whan royal Jamie sway'd the sovereign rod' (l.32), is not nostalgia but elegiac action: another manifestation of the historicism of the Vernacular Revival. The historical perspective is that of the Tory in politics, tracing the Stuart dynasty through 'one Race Two thousand Year',[2] and, especially, of the Episcopalian in religion, defending the 'Primitive and Apostolic Government of the Church'.[3] But one must distinguish here between continuity and evolution in the historical perspective. The humanist believes that traditions and traditional wisdom aid his understanding, thereby helping him to overcome barbarity; he does not believe that man and his institutions evolve to a state of perfection. His view of history is, rather, cyclical, as expressed in the following passage which had seized the imagination of the Scots humanist, and appeared again and again in his writings.

> The thing that's been, is that which yet shall be;
> And what is done, we done again may see:
> And there is nothing any man can shew,
> Below the sun, that can be called New.
> (Alexander Nicol "Solomons Book of Ecclesiastes Chap.I")[4]

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1. The term is Fussell's. See his "Chapter 12 -ELEGIAC ACTION", in Augustan Humanism.
2. Colvil "Mock Poem", 72. See also Mackenzie of Rosehaugh A Defence of the Antiquity of the Royal Line of Scotland and A Further Defence of the Royal Line of Scotland, Works, II, 415, 449; Drummond of Hawthornden The History Of Scotland 298.
3. From James Watson's introduction to Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Works, I, iv.
4. In The Rural Muse (Edinburgh 1753) p.125. Cf. Drummond of Hawthornden "A Speech of the Author's", Works, 218; Colvil "Mock Poem", p.25. Fergusson's partiality for Solomon is mentioned in David Irving The Poetical Works Of Robert Fergusson (Glasgow 1800) 4.

Continuity is important in that national traditions are a humanising and a stabilising element against fluctuations in the historical cycle of a nation. Continuity reminds man of what he is, where he has come from, and what he must aspire to. In poems like "THE DAFT DAYS" and "CALLER WATER" this is the central point.

4. The greatest enemy to the Scots humanist is Whiggism: the belief that luxury and superfluities bring the maximum benefit to the nation; the idea of determinist mechanisms in any form, whether of those which, like an invisible hand, ever labour for the material improvement of the nation, or those which constitute a 'moral sense' in the individual, prior to reason or learning, directing him like a remote control to right conduct; the sanctifying of mercantilism; the notion that utility is the sole criterion for the regulation of civil society.[1] Luxury and mercantilism seem particularly to have inspired anti-Whig writings: philosophical works like Mackenzie of Rosehaugh's "The Moral History Of Frugality, With Its Opposite Vices";[2] numerous satires on luxury and its evils, in the tradition of Pope and Swift,

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1. On the beneficial effects of introducing luxury and superfluities to the land see Sir James Steuart An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy, edit. by Andrew S. Skinner (2 vols, Edinburgh and London 1966) I, 150-51; on determinist mechanisms which produce prosperity see the same author's Considerations On The Interest Of Lanark In Scotland, Works, edit. by General Sir James Steuart (6 vols, London 1805) V, 287-89, and John Millar An Historical View Of The English Government (London 1787) 207, 378-79; on the moral sense see Francis Hutcheson Illustrations on the Moral Sense, edit. by Bernard Peach (Cambridge, Mass. 1971) 106, and his A System Of Moral Philosophy, I, 59; on mercantilism see John Millar The Origin Of The Distinction Of Ranks in William C. Lehman John Millar of Glasgow (Glasgow 1960) 328-29, and William Robertson A View of the Progress of Society in Europe in The History Of The Reign Of The Emperor Charles V (4 vols, London 1777) I, 97-8; on utility see David Hume Enquiries Concerning The Human Understanding And Concerning The Principle Of Morals, edit. by L.A. Selby-Bigg (2nd edit., London 1955) 183, 186, 194, 203, 211-12, 231, 254, 278.
2. Especially Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Works, I, 143, 158, 162-63.

like Fergusson's "HAME CONTENT. A SATIRE", "FASHION. A POEM", "TEA. A POEM", and "BRAID CLAITH"; and, additionally, poems advocating the retired country life, among which "PASTORAL I. MORNING", "RETIREMENT", and "Written at the HERMITAGE of BRAID, near EDINBURGH" are representative specimens. It is perhaps less apparent that "ELEGY on JOHN HOGG", and other poems of this variety, takes its lead from the late seventeenth century Episcopalian satires of the Presbyterian upstart burgher, making his way into the world of business; often, as in parts of "HALLOW-FAIR" or "LEITH RACES", hawking his way up the ladder of financial success.[1] Fergusson also wrote satires on the Whig notion of the mechanisms of progress though, more frequently, on the Whig's sentimentalism.[2] "The SOW of FEELING" and the early burlesques, "A BURLESQUE ELEGY on the amputation of a Student's Hair, before his Orders" and "The CANONGATE PLAY-HOUSE in RUINS. A BURLESQUE POEM", represent a few of his attempts in this vein. Finally, the poet and his circle were disturbed by the Whig's contention that utility was the sole arbiter in decisions of state. Where the Whig saw only progress and utility, as, for example, in the changing architecture of Edinburgh, the new Royal Exchange, the erection of George Square, Fergusson and his colleagues saw also the destruction of the past: a ruinous old town, a mouldering Holyrood Palace, a neglected Advocates Library.[3]

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1. See particularly Colvil "Mock Poem", 34-5; Pitcairne "The Assembly" (Edinburgh 1766) ix; Butler Hudibras, "The Third Part-Canto I", p.74, "Canto II", p.144. For general comments on the alliance of Presbyterianism and mercantilism see George P. Insh The Scottish Jacobite Movement (Edinburgh 1952) 89-90; Mathieson Scotland And The Union, 368.

2. These two enemies of the Scots humanist are discussed in Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Essays, Works, I, 50. See also Fussell Augustan Humanism, 21-2.

3. The humanist poet was a conservationist at heart; his opinions resemble those of the local historians who, while acknowledging progress, also had a keen feeling for the destruction of the past. See Hugo Arnot The History of Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1816) 195, 227, 523; William Maitland The History of Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1753) 151; Alexander Kincaid The History of Edinburgh (Edinburgh 1787) 109, 153.

The titles of several poems by Claudero (James Wilson), Fergusson's most important precursor as Edinburgh city poet, and the father of one of his friends and recipient of one of his 'poetical Letters',[1] are indicative of humanist opinion: "The Echo of the Royal Porch of the Palace of Holy-Rood-House, which fell under Military Execution, Anno 1753", "The last Speech and dying words of the Cross of Edinburgh, which was hanged, drawn and quartered, on Monday the 15th of March 1756, for the horrid crime of being an Incumbrance to the Street", "Scotland in Tears for the horrid Treatment of their Kings Sepulchres", "The last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words, of the Netherbow Porch of Edinburgh; which was exposed to roup and sale, on Thursday the 9th of August, 1764" (Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, 4th edit., Edinburgh 1771).[2] It was not that the Scots humanist opposed any progress; far from it; but, he demanded other criteria than just utility. According to another Scots humanist poet and novelist, Tobias Smollett, utility was to be tempered with a sense of custom and historical continuity. He could easily mingle opposing visions of a pastoral past, surviving in the present, with a new age of industry and efficiency.

> Still on thy banks so gayly green,
> May num'rous herds and flocks be seen,
> And lasses chanting o'er the pail,
> And shepherds piping in the dale,
> And ancient faith that knows no guile,
> And industry imbrown'd with toil ...
> ("Ode to Leven-Water")[3]

'Ancient faith' and 'industry': these were the humanist values Smollett extolled in a rural area of Scotland; they were not the values he often attributed to his contemporaries. Fergusson was of the same mind.

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1. See "LETTER OF HARY FERGUSSON TO ROBERT FERGUSSON ... APRIL, 1768", in McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, I, 93.
2. All quotations from Claudero Miscellanies follow this edition.
3. Quoted in Humphry Clinker, 287. See also 365.

The modern simply failed to balance the two: on one end of the poet's "AULD REIKIE. A POEM" are Provost Drummond's commendable, but uncompleted, improvements (ll.313-28); on the other is the sad state of Holyrood Palace (ll.271-84), symbolising the lost values of the nation's past.[1]

5. Whiggism aside, the most fundamental struggle of the Scots humanist is with himself. He struggles with the limitations of his own 'blinde' judgement and with a human nature depraved by original sin.[2] In Fergusson's poems self-knowledge always means cognizance of one's own limited perceptions; 'delusive mirth' ("A TAVERN ELEGY", 1.1) and the dispelling of 'airy dreams' ("LINES WRITTEN TO COLLECTOR CHARLES LORIMER", 1.15) signal a call to take stock of one's follies and errors of judgement and to curb the impulses of his nature.[3] In a broader sense, one of the functions of literature, the poet says in "To Sir JOHN FIELDING, on his Attempt to suppress the BEGGAR's OPERA" (ll.49-66), is to aid the individual in self-restraint through reminding him again and again of the unforeseen consequences of his actions. This is to instruct the reader in useful knowledge. Like Locke, whom he had read at St Andrews, the poet believed that man was only fitted to moral knowledge and natural improvement rather than to an understanding of essences.[4] This belief is responsible for the playful satire on

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1. Cf. Smollett's comments on Edinburgh in Humphry Clinker, 260, 270.
2. See especially Drummond of Hawthornden "Sonnet i", Poems, p.53; James Garden Comparative Theology, transl. from the Latin (Glasgow 1752) 34-5, 45-6; Henry Scougal The Life of God In The Soul of Man (Newcastle 1742) 44, 48.
3. Curbing vice is an important concern of the humanist. See Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Essays, I, 23; and Fussell Augustan Humanism, 69-70, 75.
4. See An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, abridged and edit. by A.D. Woozley (Glasgow 1977) 65-6, 399.

mathematics and science in "ELEGY", On the Death of Mr. DAVID GREGORY", where the Habbie refrain, 'But now he's dead', neatly undervalues the absolute significance of the professor's erudition. The Scots humanist accepts that man is limited by his senses; he does not, however, assume that the individual is a victim of circumstances, or a simple mechanism of fate.[1] In this lies another struggle. Man as a free agent is obligated to do battle with his lower instincts and with his misfortunes. This free agency, this assertion of the will, is a recurring theme in Fergusson's poetry: the attitude to 'Fortune', for example, both in the sense of one's lot and in the sense of material wealth, is that one is either free if one 'can contemplate with a cool disdain' the vanities of state ("Against repining at FORTUNE", I-II) or enslaved by self-deception and his own luxurious desires ("On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET", l.22).[2] From this it will be clear that the active will thrives, paradoxically, in a stoical character, able to reject external things and his own worldly desires and passions;[3] and, Fergusson avers in "The DELIGHTS of VIRTUE" (VI) or "ODE TO HOPE" (IV), able to passively submit and be contented with his lot.[4] The active

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1. See for example James Garden Comparative Theology, 19, 81-2; Mystics Of The North-East, edit. by G.D. Henderson (Spaulding Club, Aberdeen 1934) 174; Thomas I. Rae "The historical writing of Drummond of Hawthornden", 56-7; Cicero De Officiis, transl. by Walter Miller (London 1951) 119. All quotations from Cicero De Officiis follow this edition.

2. Eighteenth century humanists believed, as did the humanist of antiquity, that luxury was a type of 'Fortune' against which one had to struggle. See Donald J. Greene The Politics of Samuel Johnson (New Haven 1960) 283; Horace Satires And Epistles, transl. by Smith P. Bovie (Chicago and London 1969) "Epistles I.1, I.16", 168, 209. All quotations from Horace Satires And Epistles follow this edition.

3. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 97; F.H. Sandbach The Stoics (London 1975) 37, 68, 175; Cicero De Officiis, 69, 105; Henderson Mystics, 212, 253; Scougal Life of God, 11; Garden Comparative Theology, 36, 39-40.

4. 'Submit' and 'submission' are watchwords of the Scots humanist. See for example Henderson Mystics, 46, 60, 99-100, 103, 129-30.

will enables one, through an active imagination, to remain passive in the face of his own physical cravings and needs. It is the joys of the 'mind' (e.g. "ODE TO HOPE", 1.1; "The DELIGHTS of VIRTUE", 1.8) that concern the poet. In the struggle of the self the mind must liberate the humanist from the lure of the world and from the dictates of fortune. It must also free him from two other opponents, sobering reminders of his limitations: change and death. As with the renaissance humanist, Drummond of Hawthornden,[1] Fergusson places 'decay' ("To my AULD BREEKS", 1.58) and 'death' ("An EXPEDITION to FIFE and the Island of MAY", 1.100), ready preemptors of the moment, near the foreground of his settings. They must be conjured with. Some of the poems on the creative imagination are consequently about 'hope undaunted' ("ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT", 1.31), the chief antagonist of the two opponents; hope frees the individual from the necessary cycle of change and death through enabling him to view both as liberators in the life to come.[2]

6. Lastly, technique and form in Scots humanist literature mirror the general humanist qualities we have been discussing. For instance, Fergusson's approach to literature is hierarchical, presupposing a hierarchy of form and language, hardly different from that of James VI.

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1. See his "TEARES ON THE DEATH OF MOELIADES", 11.167-68; "Sonnet xii", 11.13-14; "Sonnet iv", 11.1-14; "Madrigall i", 11.1-2; "A CYPRESSE GROVE" (p. 165), pp.6, 21, 54, 56. In William Drummond of Hawthornden POEMS and PROSE, edit. by Robert H. MacDonald (Edinburgh and London 1976). All quotations of Drummond of Hawthornden's poetry follow this edition. The presence of unsentimental death was, notably, more characteristic of Elizabethan than of eighteenth century poetry. See William H. Irving John Gay's London (Cambridge, Mass. 1928) 353-55.

2. It is as well to recall that in the poetry of the Cavaliers and Non-Jurors, death is always a happy release. See John W. Draper The Funeral Elegy And The Rise Of English Romanticism (London 1967) 126, 200, 287; Drummond of Hawthornden Poems and Prose 156-58.

He has for example a keen sense of linguistic propriety; his more serious or philosophical poetry, like "THE DAFT-DAYS" and "JOB, CHAP III. PARAPHRASED", being characterised by a Latinate Scots and biblical English, language traditionally associated with more serious poetry of a general nature, and his coarser town satires, like "HALLOW-FAIR" or "LEITH RACES", drawing upon suitably deflating earthy Scots, often in a regional patois like Buchan (e.g. "LEITH RACES", XIV) which effectively narrows the prespective. The poet's rhetoric complements his hierarchical view of man and creation. When, for instance, he wishes to express moral contempt, he reduces his characters to mere insects, to the 'butterflies' of "BRAID CLAITH" (l.44) and of "On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET".[1] Secondly, historical continuity is maintained in the humanist theory of imitation. Fergusson makes use of conventional classical forms, the ode, the eclogue, the pastoral; directly imitates classical and neoclassical models, Horace, Virgil, Juvenal, the Scottish Latinists, Buchanan, Arthur Johnston and John Johnstone; and employs old Scots stanzaic forms, the Habbie stanza, the Christ's Kirk stanza, and the traditional genres of Scots poetry, the town poem, the town satire, the legal satire, all having a long history in Scotland right back to Dunbar.[2] In conforming to the humanist principle, Fergusson imitates; he does not copy, but builds upon the past; instructs the new age with age-old methods.[3] In addition, the poet handles form very skilfully and traditionally, rather like the Medieval Makars, who make it serve

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1. This rhetorical device is common to all eighteenth century humanists. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, "Chap. X - 'The Vermin Of Nature': Hierarchy And Moral Contempt."

2. According to two noted scholars, Dunbar is in fact the father of the town poem in Britain. Robert Aubin Topographical Poetry In XVIII-Century England (repr., New York 1966) 14; Irving John Gay's London, 357.

3. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 57.

the meaning of the poem. The most calculated instance of this, as we shall see later, is in his use of the Habbie and Christ's Kirk stanzas as an implied criticism of Whiggism. This raises other related points. Satire is the main instrument of the humanist 'to lash men from their follies' and vices;[1] for Fergusson it is a weapon with which to carry on the battle of the Tory satirists, Butler, Swift and Pope; Colvil, Pitcairne, Meston and Claudero. Such are the poems on the city of chaos, "HALLOW-FAIR", "LEITH RACES", "The ELECTION", and some few others. In the struggle of the self the satirist brings his critical faculties to bear upon himself,[2] as in "To my AULD BREEKS", though usually the poet avails himself of pastoral and counter-pastoral to represent the struggle. His natural setting is made a metaphor for a state of mind. Unlike the sentimentalists who in looking to the effect of nature on man anticipated the early Romantics, he insists, like an Emersonian, just the reverse: 'Nature always wears the colors of the spirit';[3] man governs the effect of the natural setting. In the last odes, "ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT" and "ODE TO HORROR", the pastoral vision is coloured by the frame of mind. They are particularly good examples of the pastoral of the self, the pastoral state within one's own mind.

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1. Pitcairne The Assembly, xi. Satire is avowedly the natural 'weapon' of the Scots humanist. See Robertson of Struan "To the learned and ingenious DOCTOR PITCAIRN", Poems, pp.189, 191; Meston Works, xii; Claudero "Epistle to Claudero on his Arrival at London, 1765", Miscellanies, p.63.
2. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 83.
3. Ralph Waldo Emerson "Nature", in The American Tradition in Literature, edit. by S. Bradley, R.C. Beatty, E.H. Long (3rd edit. 2 vols, New York 1967) I, 1067.

CHAPTER 3

THE TORY IDEAL

In order to understand what is meant by the disintegrating country we must begin with the Scots humanist ideal of the country and with its demise; that is, with a relative point of view. There were - and still are - those who understood the innovations that were brought to the country, in the means of production and in the consequent restructuring and wholesale removal of the rural population, to be an absolutely good thing; disintegration is not what they saw, nor what they wanted to see.[1] But for the humanist, for the Tory as against the Whig, agrarian reform meant social upheaval: the displacement of the gudeman by the new capitalist farmer; the creation of an alienated urban poor drawn from the unemployed of the country; the old laird's abandonment of his paternal role and flight to the town to commence lawyer, politician, and gallant.[2] It meant the introduction of imbalances in the natural order.

> ... as every fish lives in his own place, some in the fresh, some in the salt, some in the mud: so let everyone live in his own place, some at court, some in the city, some in the country.[3]

So went James VI's command to his nobility and gentry to keep the old fashion; 'to live in the country, and keep hospitality'.[4] Over one hundred and fifty years later the country ideal was still good Tory doctrine; in the minds of most people, Tory was the country party, and Whig the city or Court.

There are several elements of Fergusson's technique in depicting the Tory ideal which bear close scrutiny, the chief among them being

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1. See especially Sir James Steuart An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Oeconomy, I, 106-07.
2. See T.C. Smout A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830 (Bungay 1972) 266, 282, 288, 294.
3. Quoted in Isabel Rivers The Poetry of Conservatism (Cambridge 1973) 6.
4. ibid.

his use of pastoral or, more broadly speaking, his representation of la belle nature. Fergusson was very like the English and Irish Tory poets, especially Pope and Swift, for whom nature, properly speaking, was nature before the fall of man, or nature as she had sometimes been: the nature of Denham's Coopers Hill or Pope's Windsor Forest, the nature of a restored Golden Age under a Stuart king.

> See Pan with Flocks, with Fruits Pomona crown'd,
> Here blushing Flora paints th' enamel'd Ground,
> Here Ceres' Gifts in waving Prospect stand,
> And nodding tempt the joyful Reaper's Hand,
> Rich Industry sits smiling on the Plains,
> And Peace and Plenty tell, a STUART reigns.
> ("Windsor-Forest", ll. 37-42)

Similarly, pastoral in Fergusson's verse is Eden; the ideal state of man; the socially balanced Tory state; concordia discors at work in the microcosm; a natural landscape with man in the foreground, building upon nature, tapping her vast resources and conquering winter; above all, civilisation, the repository of Christian humanist social and cultural traditions. Should we seek models of his Tory pastoral ideal, we will find them in his Horatian 'fairy dream' (1.6) "DUMFRIES", where epicurean retirement is a prescription for the good life; in the celebration of the hamely 'Eden' (1.2) of "CALLER WATER" with the age old May day festivities; in the principle of order and control suggested by Wilkie's 'bonny riggs ... An' thrivin hedges' ("AN ECLOGUE, to ... Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE", 11.69-70); in - as we shall see- the liberating social structure of the "ODE to the GOWDSPINK", 11.53-60); in the rhetoric of clothing and shelter - symbols of civilisation - in the pastoral sections of poems like "LEITH RACES", where 'nature's rokelay green' protects the riggs of corn (11.2-3); supremely, in the precisely measured tension and admirable, Poussin-like restraint of "The FARMER's INGLE".

Then, too, as a typical humanist poet of his age, pastoral was a natural form for describing the human condition, and, equally, with the humanist tendency to define man's state in terms of himself, for expressing the poet's innermost conflict of will. Since the struggle of the will features in most of the country poems, it is worth underlining the direct relationship between them and the more personal - some of them autobiographical - pastorals: the pastorals of the self. The time span of Fergusson's creative years is unfortunately too compressed to permit a developmental analysis of these pastorals, yet, nonetheless, we can detect a gradual shift away from a stoical optimism to unmitigated pessimism, just as we do in the rural poems. Certainly the titles of some of the earlier works are more sanguine: "Against repining at FORTUNE", "ODE TO HOPE", "The Delights of Virtue". In these openly didactic works there is expressed a moral optimism. Reject the allurements of the court, 'the gorgeous vanity of state' ("Against repining ...", l.5); shun the 'lavish dainties' of 'luxury' ("Against repining ...", l.37); contemplate, from within, freedom over fickle fortune and, in the glory of this freedom, the beauty of nature; virtue and beauty here being synonymous, as with the classical philosophers. The optimistic moral is that one can, and does, recreate Eden for himself.

> O happy he whose conscience knows no guile!
> He to the sable night can bid farewel;
> From cheerless objects close his eyes a while,
> Within the silken folds of sleep to dwell.
>
> Elysian dreams shall hover round his bed,
> His soul shall wing, on pleasing fancies born,
> To shining vales where flow'rets lift their head,
> Wak'd by the breathing zephyrs of the morn.
>
> ("CONSCIENCE. AN ELEGY", ll.5-12)

Can he, who with the tide of Fortune sails,
More pleasure from the sweets of nature share?
Do Zephyrs waft him more ambrosial gales,
Or do his groves a gayer livery wear?

To me the heavn's unveil as pure a sky;
To me the flow'rs as rich a bloom disclose:
The morning beams as radiant to my eye,
And darkness guides me to as sweet repose.

("Against repining at FORTUNE",
11.29-36)

O smiling Hope! in adverse hour,
I feel thy influencing power:
Though frowning Fortune fix my lot,
In some defenceless lonely cot,
Where poverty, with empty hands,
In pallid meagre aspect stands;
Thou can'st enrobe me, 'midst the great,
With all the crimson pomp of state,
Where luxury invites his guests
To pall them with his lavish feasts:
What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,
So black with horror, dead with fear!
But thou can'st dart thy streaming ray,
And change closs night to open day.

Health is attendant in thy radiant train,
Round her the whisp'ring zephyrs gently play,
Behold her gladly tripping o'er the plain,
Bedeck'd with rural sweets and garlands gay.

("ODE TO HOPE", 11.17-34)

So shines fair VIRTUE, shedding light divine
On those who wish to profit by her ways;
Who ne'er at parting with their vice repine,
To taste the comforts of her blissful rays.

She with fresh hopes each sorrow can beguile,
Can dissipate Adversity's stern gloom,
Make meagre Poverty contented smile,
And the sad wretch forget his hapless doom.

Sweeter than shady groves in summer's pride,
Than flowery dales or grassy meads is she;
Delightful as the honey'd streams that glide
From the rich labours of the busy bee.

Her paths and alleys are for ever green;
There Innocence, in snowy robes array'd,
With smiles of pure content is hail'd the queen
And happy mistress of the sacred shade.

("The DELIGHTS of VIRTUE", 11.17-32)

This is an affirmation of mind over matter; a noble imagination colouring one's perception of the world. In good humanist terms,

> Man is a singular creature. He has a set of gifts which make him unique among the animals: so that, unlike them, he is not a figure in the landscape - he is a shaper of the landscape.[1]

As we move on to the later odes a different mood becomes apparent. Even their titles express acknowledged tension: "ODE TO HORROR", "ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT", "ON NIGHT". The pastoral vision begins now to blur. The character of the verse is more personal and compelling. The perceiver has changed from the moral optimist. And with a change in him, the landscape is remoulded. Snakes occupy the garden which, in a momentary perception, is transformed - in the opposing humanist rhetoric of counterpastoral - into 'desart woods' ("ODE TO PITY", l.11), a barbarous waste, a natural model of 'this black and iron age' which can only be overcome with a return to human sympathy ("ODE TO PITY", ll.25, 37-46). This salvo, this momentary lapse into the 'mistress of the feeling heart!' ("ODE TO PITY", l.37), does not ring true in Fergusson, anymore than does his stoical philosophising at the end of "ODE TO HORROR". In the genial, but sometimes peevish, Matthew Bramble we easily accept the prescription -

> ... I begin to think I have put myself on the superannuated list too soon, and absurdly sought for health in the retreats of laziness - I am persuaded that all valetudinarians are too sedentary, too regular, and too cautious - We should sometimes increase the motion of the machine, to unclog the wheels of life ...
>
> (HUMPHRY CLINKER, 381)

- not so in the gloomy Fergusson

> Now from the oozing caves he flies
> And to the city's tumults hies,

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1. This is the opening sentence of one of the monumental works of modern humanism, J. Bronowski The Ascent Of Man (London 1977) 19.

Thinking to frolick life away,
Be ever chearful, ever gay:
But tho' enwrapt in noise and smoke,
They ne'er can heal his peace when broke;
His fears arise, he sighs again
For solitude on rural plain;
Even there his wishes all conveen
To bear him to his noise again.
Thus tortur'd, rack'd, and sore opprest,
He constant hunts, but never finds his rest.

ANTISTROPHE

Oh exercise! thou healing power
The toiling rustic's chiefest dower;
Be thou with parent virtue join'd
To quell the tumults of the mind;

Then man as much of joy can share
From ruffian winter, bleakly bare,
As from the pure aetherial blaze
That wantons in the summer rays;
The humble cottage then can bring
Content, the comfort of a king;
And gloomy mortals wish no more
For wealth and idleness to make them poor.

("ODE TO HORROR", ll.37-60)

Clearly, the prescription is not equal to the disease. The adversary is not so much poverty, as in the earlier odes, or, as it is claimed to be in the last lines, but mental illness, 'tumults of the mind' (l.52). Even the graveyard poetic effects - 'oozing caves' (l.37) and the like - fail to reduce the intensity of the scene. Fergusson's head was indeed 'distemper'd' (l.25) by this time, and his use of such adjectives is not casual or frivolous. In the final works moral optimism yields to pessimism, a disarming of the individual will: spiritual suicide for the humanist. The poet tells us of this in the few, not so hopeful, lines about his imminent decline.

May I, when drooping days decline,
And 'gainst those genial streams combine,
The winter's sad decay forsake,
And center in my parent lake.

("THE AUTHOR's LIFE", ll.7-10)

The last works see man at the mercy of a cruel and indifferent nature beyond his control.

> NOW murky shades surround the pole;
> Darkness lords without controul;
> To the notes of buzzing owl
> Lions roar, and tygers howl.
> Fright'ning from their azure shrine,
> Stars that wont in orbs to shine:
> Now the sailor's storm-tost bark
> Knows no blest celestial mark,
> While, in the briny troubled deep,
> Dolphins change their sport for sleep:
> Ghosts, and frightful spectres gaunt,
> Church-yards dreary footsteps haunt,
> And brush, with wither'd arms, the dews
> That fall upon the drooping yews.
>
> ("ON NIGHT", ll.1-14)

> Why then is grateful light bestow'd on man,
> Whose life is darkness, all his days a span?
> For 'ere the morn return'd my sighing came,
> My mourning pour'd out as the mountain stream;
> Wild visag'd fear, with sorrow-mingled eye,
> And wan destruction piteous star'd me nigh;
> For though nor rest nor safety blest my soul,
> New trouble came, new darkness, new controul.
>
> ("JOB, CHAP. III, PARAPHRASED." ll.47-54)

Brooding has devolved into an obsession with self destruction.

All this is germane to our understanding of his rural poems: this pastoral imagination expressive of Fergusson's ideals and his failure to realise them. His rural poems magnify his disrupted pastoral vision as they focus upon an entire society that was forfeiting its will, and, thereby, its powers over nature, its humanity, its civilisation. In other words the humanist Fergusson saw in himself a mirror image - a distant reflection - of the society around him; hence his use of pastoral runs along parallel lines in these two forms of poetry under discussion.

Fergusson wrote his only conventional pastorals, properly speaking, in relating pastoral to the Tory ideal; his other rural poems are

decidedly counterpastoral, albeit equally anti-Whig. In the conventional pastorals he creates and resolves tension between pastoral and its opposite, often between art and nature, where the first represents the agrarian revolution and the forces of change, and the other the traditional - the Tory - way of life.[1] In "THE LEE RIGG", for example, nature - the 'thornie-dike and birken-tree' (1.5) - sides with rural love and protects it from the new intruders to the agrarian community: from the 'ill een' (1.7) of 'herds wi' kent or colly' (1.9) driving 'their lambs and ewes' for 'warld's gear' (11.13-14); from the new sheepfarming, the mass intrusion of southern sheep, which by 1760, was well underway and which, by 1772, was accelerating the process of emigration from the Highlands.

> At thornie-dike and birken-tree
> We'll daff, and ne'er be weary O;
> They'll scug ill een frae you and me,
> Mine ain kind deary O.
>
> Nae herds wi' kent or colly there,
> Shall ever come to fear ye O;
> But lav'rocks, whistling in the air,
> Shall woo, like me, their deary O!
>
> While others herd their lambs and ewes,
> And toil for warld's gear, my jo,
> Upon the lee my pleasure grows,
> Wi' you, my kind dearie O!
>
> (11.5-16)

Nature sanctions the courtship of the older variety of farmer, who follows the natural order; courting in unison with the 'lav'rocks' and completing the life cycle of perpetual renewal, like the grass itself: the line runs on 'my pleasure grows,/Wi' you', an aptly suggestive metaphor of procreation.

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1. Raymond Williams asserts that the art versus nature contrast implies in itself 'values by which the coming industrial civilisation was to be condemned'. Culture and Society 1780-1950 (Harmondsworth 1971) 54.

In one of the poet's first literary efforts, "PASTORAL II. NOON.", the political conflict at hand is more elaborately enunciated. The poem appears to be a straightforward neoclassical lament of Corydon for his Delia in the style of John Cunningham or William Shenstone. However, the conflict between Corydon and Delia's father, between Corydon's pastoral dreams and the socio-economic realities of his situation, has political overtones which are untypical of the neoclassical pastoral.

Setting is all important in effecting the transformation of the didactic British pastoral into a gentle piece of Scots Tory propaganda. The natural setting, one of intense, stinging heat, from which the shepherds move to 'a cool repose' (l.12) in shaded woods, has as its implied counterpart a political setting in the present residence to which Delia's father has taken her. According to Corydon, Delia no longer enjoys the 'embowering solitary shade' (l.20) but

> ... wanders o'er the Anglian plain,
> Where civil discord and sedition reign.
>
> (ll.23-24)

He adverts here to the struggle between Lord North and the Whigs[1] and, in so doing, distinguishes himself, as Tory, from the Whig father. Later the lover reveals that he and his opponent are two different men of the soil, he being a mere subsistence farmer who has not yet assimilated modern techniques of enclosure, and the father, obviously one of the new capitalist 'herds', mentioned before in "THE LEE RIGG".

CORYDON

> Though Delia greet my love I sigh in vain,
> Such joy unbounded can I ne'er obtain.
> Her sire a thousand fleeces numbers o'er
> And grassy hills increase his milky store;

---

1. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 25", 251.

While the weak fences of a scanty fold
Will all my sheep and fattening lambkins hold.

(11.41-46)

This enhances the political dimension; the Whig laird and his agrarian reforms have driven a social wedge between the lovers. But this is gentle propaganda indeed; unfortunately one of those stilted eighteenth century poems with a contrived happy ending. Corydon's elder friend Timanthes, the archetypal Tory laird and father figure,[1] instantly saves the day, restoring Corydon's herd, his love, and pastoral song.

TIMANTHES

'Tis joy, my friend, to think I can repay
The loss you bore by autumn's rigid sway.
Yon fertile meadow where the daisies spring
Shall yearly pasture to your heifers bring:
Your flock with mine shall on yon mountain feed,
Cheer'd by the warbling of your tuneful reed:
No more shall Delia's ever fretful sire
Against your hopes and ardent love conspire.
Roud'd by her smiles you'll tune the happy lay,
While hills responsive waft your songs away.

(11.61-70)

Note how the two ideas of Timanthes' opposition to the Whig father, and his protection from the effects of a hostile nature - 'autumn's rigid sway (1.62) - are linked, for this is a recurring technique of Fergusson's; two determinist destructive forces, autumn and Whiggery, are brought together as threats to the pastoral state. With the same significance the closing lines, which neatly counterbalance the anti-pastoral opening, see Timanthes leading Corydon away from the sharp

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1. According to T.C. Smout, 'By tradition, no landowners were more deeply and sincerely paternalist than the Scots, treasuring the old values that a laird's worth was still to be measured as much by the abundance of the dependent population around him as by the weight of his rent roll.' "The Landowner and the Planned Village in Scotland, 1730-1830", Scotland in the Age of Improvement, edit. by N.T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (Edinburgh 1970) 77.

rays of the sun; spiritually away from the ill effects of Delia's father.

TIMANTHES

> But lo! the heats invite us at our ease
> To court the twining shades and cooling breeze;
> Our languid joints we'll peaceably recline,
> And 'midst the flowers and opening blossoms dine.
>
> (11.75-78)

The Edenic garden is restored by Timanthes, the stay-at-home laird who cares for his tenants. The natural and the Tory ideal are one and the same.

Fergusson's best work on the Tory ideal is unquestionably "The FARMER's INGLE", a pastoral celebrating the life of the gudeman, whose existence - along with the social structure to which he belonged - was doomed by the new class of wrack-renting capitalist lairds. The gudeman was a substantial tenant with land holdings up to one hundred acres, who lived in a two room but and ben, and enjoyed a life of rough plenty; independently providing for himself, his family and farm hands, in their food and clothing.[1] His life was totally communal. He herded his animals in common with other gudemen and, in the same manner, cultivated his land alongside them according to the runrig system; with his servants he shared his living quarters, co-operated in the daily chores, and shared his literary and biblical interests, there being no social gulf between gudeman and servant. The agrarian revolution put a stop to all this. It brought improved techniques of husbandry and a higher standard of living to the country, but also a less communal society. The laird's new stone house was an impregnable social barricade against the aspirations of his servants. What the agrarian revolution meant to

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1. See Smout A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830, 282-86.

the gudeman and cottar is documented by Robert Burns - himself one of its victims - in his "MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN - A DIRGE".

"The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Out-spreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labor to support
A haughty lordling's pride; -
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return;
And ev'ry time has added proofs,
That man was made to mourn.

"See yonder poor, o'er labour'd wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, though a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

"If I'm design'd yon lordling's slave -
By Nature's law design'd -
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty, or scorn?
Or why has man the will and pow'r
To make his fellow mourn?

(11.17-24, 57-72)[1]

Fergusson's pastoral is the literary counterpart of the Leveller's Revolts of the early eighteenth century, with its roots firmly planted in the protest poems of the early Revival, like "The Speech of a Fife Laird, Newly come from the Grave", from Watson's Choice Collection.

When I was born at Middle-yard weight,
There was no word of Laird or Knight:
The greatest Stiles of Honour then,
Was to be Titl'd the Good-man.
But changing Time hath chang'd the Case,
And puts a Laird in th' Good-man's place.

(I, 11.87-91)

A protest poem it indeed is. But let this not deflect our atten-

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1. Quoted from The Complete Works Of Robert Burns (Gebbie Self-Interpreting Edition, 6 vols, New York 1909).

tion from the totality of a work that is not just backward but also forward looking; timeless and local; classical and modern: a fine balance of opposites. This is the substance of the poem: concordia discors, the ancient cosmology of harmony through balanced opposition, which became, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a cosmic rationale for the Tory ideal,[1] and is here exemplified in the gudeman's life. The various parts of the poem manifest this principle and neatly balance the two sides of the whole. It is a masterpiece of construction. The literary fabric itself, out of which many traditions are brought together, is a mixed weave of ancient and modern influence. In "The FARMER's INGLE" we discern the classical influence of Virgil's Bucolics, from whence its motto is taken, his Georgics (e.g. "BOOK II", 11.512-542) and Horace's Epodes (e.g. "Epode 2"): idealised pictures of farm life in the home, in winter, before the ingle. There are touches of Milton and Spenser, two of the poets of the seventeenth century revival,[2] especially evident in the modified Spenserian stanza, whose alternate rhyme and rhythmic scheme underpin the idea of balance; in the use of antiquated English words like 'welkin' (1.1), often used by Spenser; and in the syntax of the following lines which are so reminiscent of Milton.

> For cleanly house looes he, tho'e'er sae mean. (1.18)
>
> Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems. (1.27)
>
> For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise. (1.45)
>
> Whase floods did erst their mailins produce hash ... (1.49)

By contrast the work alludes to the contemporary rationalist - realistic -

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1. See Earl R. Wasserman The Subtler Language (Baltimore 1959) 53-58, 106-13.

2. For a full discussion of the seventeenth century revival see Earl R. Wasserman Elizabethan Poetry In The Eighteenth Century (Urbana 1947).

pastorals of the day. What a sure footed opening Fergusson has made of a twilight setting, a slow rhythm, and long o, a and l sounds that immediately conjure up the first lines of Gray's "Elegy".

> THE Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
> The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
> The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
> And leaves the world to darkness and to me.
>
> Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight ...
>
> (Gray's "Elegy", ll.1-5)[1]

> WHAN gloming grey out o'er the welkin keeks,
> Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre,
> Whan Thrasher John, sair dung, his bard-door steeks,
> And lusty lasses at the dighting tire:
> What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld ...
>
> (ll.1-5)

The setting of Symon's house (Gentle Shepherd, "Act III, Scene II") and Peggy's lines depicting the 'Cheerfu' home (Gentle Shepherd, "Act I, Scene II") are most likely the basis of the home that welcomes the gudeman in stanzas II and III. The simple fare and health giving labour of stanza IV read like Thomson's "The Castle of Indolence" ("Canto II, Stanzas LV-LVII"); and stanza V on 'Caledonia's ancestors' resembles William Shenstone's 'bold fathers' in his "Elegy XV", ll.37-40. The gudeman section brings together material from Thomson ("Winter", ll.617-20 = VII, ll.59-63), Shenstone ("The Schoolmistress", ll.33-6 = VIII, ll.68-72), and Gay ("Rural Sports, Canto II", ll.430-35 = IX, ll.75-81).

Philosophically, again, the work looks backward and forward in time. By moderate or utilitarian standards of the day it would have been thought a reactionary poem indeed. The 'gudeman' honoured here was already well behind the times in his techniques of farming; the

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1. Quoted from The Oxford Book Of Eighteenth Century Verse, edit. by David Nichol Smith (Oxford 1966).

runrig system (l.111) he operates having pretty well become obsolete in the Lothians by 1760, and the use of the pack horse (l.93) having been replaced by the sledge, which was capable of carrying two to three times the burden.[1] If this is, as it seems to be, a reactionary poem, we must, however, qualify our assertion. It is altogether too well schooled in the topical economic issues of the Scottish Enlightenment of the 1760s and 1770s. For one thing, Fergusson uses the word industry, in various forms here; it being a key word of utilitarian economic philosophy, applied continuously and specifically to the new age of efficiency and utility. Here industry - 'eidant hand' (l.29), 'thrift, industrious' (l.73), 'industry' (l.101) - is instead chosen to describe the farming unit of the gudeman, his family and servants. Take as an illustration the grannie. It takes only a small stretch of the imagination, in view of expressions like 'thrift, industrious' (l.73) and 'e'enin stent' (l.76), to see the grannie as one of the many women spinning in the home, not solely for the family's clothes, but for merchant capitalists wont to pay by the piece.[2] It was in just such part-time endeavours in the countryside that the Industrial Revolution had begun; it was a movement 'rooted in the countryside'.[3]

IX

> Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
> Tho' age her sair dow'd front wi' runcles wave,
> Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
> Her e'enin stent reels she as weel's the lave.
>
> (11.73-76)

We have not to stretch our imaginations to perceive the rather weighty

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1. James E. Handley Scottish Farming In The Eighteenth Century (London 1953) 29.
2. See Henry Hamilton An Economic History of Scotland In The Eighteenth Century (Oxford 1963) 363, 367.
3. Bronowski The Ascent Of Man, 259, 265.

theme of maximum productivity. Everything animate and inanimate under the gudeman's roof labours to achieve the Enlightenment ideal of the highest amount of productive labour.[1] The servants work until they are fatigued (l.4); the old grannie cares for the bairnies (ll.60-3), makes their clothes and does an evening's work (ll.73-81); the gudwife organises every detail of the house (ll.15-18), feeds the entire household to their full capacity (ll.19-27), delegates tasks to the 'hireling damsels' and provides for the care of the farm animals (ll.95-99); the gudeman presides over the efficient running of the farm (ll.10-18), gives the 'morning counsel', assigning the different chores (ll.91-94), and maintains his domestic animals at no extra expense, almost as an exact paradigm of what Smith had set down in his Wealth Of Nations some few years later on feeding smaller animals from the 'little offals of their own table ...'.[2] Note the poet's calculated selection of the word 'fee' to suggest the excellent economy.

X

> Round him will badrins and the colly come,
> To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' eie
> To him wha kindly flings them mony a crum
> O' kebbock whang'd, and dainty fadge to prie;
> This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.
>
> (ll.86-90)

Even the inanimate objects of the household work to their optimum level. At the end of the day

> The cruizy too can only blink and bleer,
> The restit ingle's done the maist it dow ...
>
> (ll.104-05)

Furthermore, maximum productivity is coupled with the modern economic theory that the country supports the town.[3]

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1. Smith Wealth Of Nations, 279, 523.
2. Smith Wealth Of Nations, 181.
3. Smith Wealth Of Nations, 98. 291-92; Steuart Political Oeconomy, I, 47.

> Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
> Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year ...
>
> (11.109-10)

However mistaken, the argument is that the old gudeman system can, or already does, yield what were to be the fruits of Whig agrarian reform. The great upheaval was unnecessary; the Tory ideal could meet modern demands of production. Or so the argument ran. This was another attempt to update the old Tory model; to prove that the past should be maintained in the present; in modern parlance, to reconcile progress with primitivism. It is the same delicate balance of opposites Matthew Bramble seeks in Smollett's Humphry Clinker, deftly connoted in Fergusson's carefully selected word 'tribe' (1.109). Matthew Bramble finds in the Highlands

> ... ancient faith that knows no guile,
> And industry imbrown'd with toil ...
>
> ("ODE TO LEVEN WATER", Humphry Clinker, 287)

The literary and philosophical elements are the outer tissues which bind together the thematic core of "The FARMER's INGLE". At the core itself is the theme of the harmoniously balanced society. Perhaps civilisation would be a better substantive than society; in this case the Tory ideal is equated with civilisation. The gudeman's life, his abode, the social network of his existence constitute civilisation of a high order. The tension at the core, we find, sets in balance civilisation against - in the broadest humanist rhetorical sense - 'winter': all that which man has to struggle against in order to become civilised; the naked elements which oppose him; all forces which deprive him of his freedom to act - 'the poortith o' the plain' (1.8), the disruption and havoc of 'winters sour' (11.48-9). Pastoral and free will, as mentioned earlier, were linked in the

personal pastorals, and that image of winter was a metaphor which Fergusson had inherited from the anti-Whig poetry of the past, winter meaning Whiggery, barbarity, chaos, determinism.[1] Hence the poem begins with a rhetorical question about winter and poverty; implicitly with a question about human freedom.

> What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
> And gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain;
> Gars dowie mortals look baith blyth and bauld,
> Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain;
> Begin, my Muse, and chant in hamely strain.
>
> (11.5-8)

Lines 1-27 answer the question with reference to order, the balanced social system which enables each individual or group to provide for others, and with reference to shelter, an important - Fergusson's most often used - humanist symbol for civilisation. Man does not live in perpetual spring or summer; buildings, architecture, the warm interiors that he has created for himself enable him to overcome the perils of winter. They are palpable monuments of human freedom and continuity. In Fergusson they are an integral part of his pastoral vision. Eden is for the humanist poet a state of mind. But, equally, it is the physical milieu man constructs for himself. As he says in "AN ECLOGUE, To ... Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE",

> The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields,
> An' aft as mony gleefu' maments yields.
>
> (11.15-16)

The idyll has moved indoors as here we follow the gudeman from the fields into his but and ben.

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1. See especially "London's Wonder: The Great Frost, 1683/4", "Freezeland Fair; or, The Icy Bear-Garden", in The Roxburghe Ballads, edit. by Charles Hindley and J. Woodfall Ebsworth (9 vols, 1871-99) 457-62.

I

Whan gloming grey out o'er the welkin keeks,
Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre,
Whan Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door steeks,
And lusty lasses at the dighting tire:
What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
And gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain;
Gars dowie mortals look baith blyth and bauld,
Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain;
Begin, my Muse, and chant in hamely strain.

II

Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
Wi' divets theekit frae the weet and drift,
Sods, peats, and heath'ry trufs the chimley fill,
And gar their thick'ning smeek salute the lift;
The gudeman, new come hame, is blyth to find,
Whan he out o'er the halland flings his een,
That ilka turn is handled to his mind,
That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean;
For cleanly house looes he, tho' e'er sae mean.

III

Weel kens the gudewife that the pleughs require
A heartsome meltith, and refreshing synd
O' nappy liquor, o'er a bleezing fire:
Sair wark and poortith douna weel be join'd.
Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks,
I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams;
The readied kail stand by the chimley cheeks,
And had the riggin het wi' welcome steams,
Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

(11.1-27)

Everything in and out of doors is neatly ordered on the gudeman's farm. Outside there is a precise division of labour evident in each worker completing his assigned task: 'Batie ca's his owsen to the byre; /... Thrasher John ... his barn-door steeks, /... lusty lasses at the dighting tire' (11.2-4). Inside, the household runs like a small assembly line, every phase of which meshes precisely as each requirement is provided for: '... the big stack, weel winnow't ...' supplies the chimney with 'divets' (11.10-12); 'ilka turn is handled to his (gudeman's) mind' (1.16); the gudewife provides sustenance for the household from a kitchen which , with everything so neatly in place, itself

exemplifies the principle of order. Winter freezes in vain and poverty cannot frighten, then, because the gudeman imposes structure and control upon his environment.

With lines 28-45 the poet pauses and reflects upon the past and upon free will.

IV

Frae this lat gentler gabs a lesson lear;
Wad they to labouring lend an eidant hand,
They'd rax fell strang upo' the simplest fare,
Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.
Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day,
At night in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound,
Nor doctor need their weary life to spae,
Nor drogs their noddle and their sense confound,
Till death slip sleely on, and gi'e the hindmost wound.

V

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed
By Caledonia's ancestors been done;
By this did mony wight fu' weirlike bleed
In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun:
'Twas this that brac'd their gardies, stiff and strang,
That bent the deidly yew in antient days,
Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird alang,
Gar'd Scottish thristles bang the Roman bays;
For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise.

This is a primitivist idealisation of the gudeman as the classical stoic, not to be made by a doctor and his 'drogs' (l.35), but labouring industriously and thriving upon the simplest fare; making himself all the time. The juxtaposition of stanzas places on a par the gudeman and 'Caledonia's ancestors' (l.38), who determined their own fate in battle with the Danes and Romans, and is another way of affirming that the gudeman rules his own destiny because he does not change. His freedom lies in upholding ancient ways.

A long section (ll.46-81) examines the social relations of the household.

VI

The couthy cracks begin whan supper's o'er,
The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash
O' simmer's showery blinks and winters sour,
Whase floods did erst their mailins produce hash:
'Bout kirk and market eke their tales gae on,
How Jock woo'd Jenny here to be his bride,
And there how Marion, for a bastard son,
Upo' the cutty-stool was forc'd to ride,
The waefu' scald o' our Mess John to bide.

VII

The fient a chiep's amang the bairnies now;
For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane:
Ay maun the childer, wi' a fastin mou',
Grumble and greet, and make an unco mane,
In rangles round before the ingle's low:
Frae gudame's mouth auld warld tale they hear,
O' Warlocks louping round the Wirrikow,
O' gaists that win in glen and kirk-yard drear,
Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak wi' fear.

VIII

For weel she trows that fiends and fairies be
Sent frae the de'il to fleetch us to our ill;
That ky hae tint their milk wi' evil eie,
And corn been scowder'd on the glowing kill.
O mock na this, my friends! but rather mourn,
Ye in life's brawest spring wi' reason clear,
Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear;
The mind's ay cradled whan the grave is near.

IX

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
Tho' age her sair dow'd front wi' runcles wave,
Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
Her e'enin stent reels she as weel's the lave.
On some feast-day, the wee-things buskit braw
Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,
Fu' cadgie that her head was up and saw
Her ain spun cleething on a darling oy,
Careless tho' death shou'd make the feast her foy.

Again the antithetical element - winter - underlines the theme of civilisation, freedom, the fulfil ment of the harmonic balance. The family rumination on 'winters sour' (11.48-9) is offset by 'couthy cracks', the 'cheering bicker', and the lighthearted conversation ' 'Bout kirk and market' (11.46-7, 50); in short, by the warm, secure setting and social milieu of the home. With the scene of gudame and

her grandchildren the balanced antithesis assumes greater prominence. It takes two principal forms. Death and life, winter and spring are the leitmotifs held in opposition here. The gudame and the bairnies, of course, occupy different ends in the life cycle, yet even so there is a symbiotic relationship between the two which enables the grannie to exert her power of volition and, in a stoical sense, to master death. The grannie is said to be in the winter of her life; at the stage of impending death. Unlike those 'in life's brawest spring' (1.69), she is at the end of her days (11.72, 81). Mentally she lives out her last - note the seasonal light imagery - 'dim' and 'dolefu' days' (1.71) of superstition and senility as she returns, exactly counter to the growth of the bairnies, to a state of 'bairnly fear' and 'cradled' senility (11.71-2). Nonetheless she is a life force who provides for the grandchildren. Her superstitious old world tales feed the restless imaginations of the children (11.60-3) and her industry at the spindle, making the bairnies' clothes (1.75), enables her to overcome the approaching grave; in great part she most of all celebrates life and provides for the feast (11.77-81).

Lines 82-117 consider the key ideas of industry and economy in very human terms; opening with the gudeman, in his exact economy, providing for the house pets from crumbs of the family meal, and proceeding to the delegation of various tasks, down to the finest details of labour and frugality: the weight the old horse can carry and the produce to be lost if the cow is not properly tethered or watched.

X

In its auld lerroch yet the deas remains,
Whare the gudeman aft streeks him at his ease,
A warm and canny lean for weary banes
O' lab'rers doil'd upo' the wintry leas:
Round him will badrins and the colly come,
To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' eie

To him wha kindly flings them mony a crum
O' kebbock whang'd, and dainty fadge to prie;
This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

XI

Frae him the lads their morning counsel tak,
What stacks he wants to thrash, what rigs to till;
How big a birn maun lie on bassie's back,
For meal and multure to the thirling mill.
Niest the gudewife her hireling damsels bids
Glowr thro' the byre, and see the hawkies bound,
Take tent case Crummy tak her wonted tids,
And ca' the leglin's treasure on the ground,
Whilk spills a kebbuck nice, or yellow pound.

XII

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
Their joints to slack frae industry a while;
The leaden God fa's heavy on their ein,
And hafflins steeks them frae their daily toil:
The cruizy too can only blink and bleer,
The restit ingle's done the maist it dow;
Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,
Upo' the cod to clear their drumly pow,
Till wauken'd by the dawning's ruddy glow.

The economic implications of the passage are a means to an end; the subject is, rather, the gudeman's directing his own destiny through regulating his economy so skilfully. And, we might add, through regulating himself so wisely. Rest and industry (11.83, 85, 100-01), the main antithesis in the section, appear as the means by which he consciously - and this is a crucial humanist concept - uses nature and technology for his own purposes and creates civilisation for himself. Winter is no longer cast as the great menace of before; the gudeman can now rest having brought his energies to bear and cultivated the 'wintry leas' (1. 85). His use of nature and technology is most effectively portrayed in lines 100-08 which open with the 'sleep' - 'industry' cycle.

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
Their joints to slack frae industry a while ...

What follows is an identification of the gudeman and the social system

of 'Tacksman and cottar' (l.106) with the implements of household light, the 'cruizy' and 'ingle'. Again this brings together opposites, animate man with inanimate objects that make civilised life possible, and dramatises his harmonious relationship with them. At the same time there is an implied comparison between man's cycle - from bleer-eyed fatigue to the clearing of his 'drumly pow' (l.107) - and nature's daily cycle from night, 'The leaden God' (l.102), to day, 'the dawning's ruddy glow' (l.108). The poet as a Tory humanist took exception to the Whig's unqualified glorification of industry, production, utility as ends in themselves, where man serves the machine or the mechanisms of progress and produces like an automaton. In 1787 Burns, observing the Carron Iron Works, scratched on a window-pane

> We cam na here to view your warks,
> In hopes to be mair wise,
> But only, lest we gang to Hell,
> It may be nae surprise.[1]

With the same eyes the young Fergusson saw through the Agrarian Revolution and shook his head in doubt. In these last quoted lines of his he is saying that the farmer must not only harness the power of nature but must follow nature; he must rest as well as work; he must use his implements as natural extensions of himself; as tools of humanity; tools that mirror a human mind and heart. This too is what is meant by humanism. The closing lines bring together the two general statements regarding the gudeman's socio-economic system and his freedom to lead a civilised existence. The first generalisation transforms the modern economic theory, the country sustains the town, into a justification of the gudeman's antiquated 'sock and couter' (l.111) methods, and, overall, of his old ways (ll.109-112).

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1. Quoted in Kenneth Clark CIVILISATION (London 1979) 321.

XIII

Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year;
Lang may his sock and couter turn the gleyb,
And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear.

The second generalisation is a recapitulation of the seasonal metaphor. Through the rhetorical structure - 'May SCOTIA'S simmers ...', 'May a' her tenants ...' (ll.113, 115) - the analogy of summer and the gudeman's lifestyle is restated emphatically. Both guarantee growth, continuity and prosperity for the nation. The ultimate answer to the opening question, what 'gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain' (l.6), is the summer the gudeman through his industry has created for himself: in his abode, the social unit which he maintains, and in his planned economy, freeing him from winter and 'poortith' (ll.113-117).

May SCOTIA'S simmers ay look gay and green,
Her yellow har'sts frae scowry blasts decreed;
May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
Frae the hard grip of ails and poortith freed,
And a lang lasting train o' peaceful hours succeed.

By the end of the poem we have moved from winter, via the gudeman's home interior, to summer, and the summer - civilisation equation. The seasonal metaphor, the metaphor of warmth and light, is in fact crucial to the poem's structure. Light and heat imagery underpin the symbolism of the gudeman's life as a continual summer of his own making, and as an ingle, a light-giving centre which irradiates and infuses everything round it. Hence it is an apt symbol of the gudeman social unit, each segment of which is interdependent yet, as a string of dependencies, serves the nation at large. Through the symbol of the ingle, deftly chosen for the title of the poem, the gudeman becomes elemental to life. For fire, as the classical writers thought of it - and Fergusson had them in mind when he chose his motto from Virgil -, was the breath of life which flowed through all substances. The poem begins in the soft

light of the 'gloaming grey' (1.1) and prepares us for an indoor scene of conviviality which 'bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld' (1.5). 'Thick'ning smeek' from the 'chimley' (11.12-13) beckons the farmer to food, warmth, and the society of the ingle. At his but and ben the gudeman enters a cottage of light, by a 'bleezing fire' and reeking 'girdle' (11.21, 23), and heat, 'the riggin het wi' welcome steams' (1.26), and heat generating substances - 'nappy liquor' (1.21), 'readied kail by the chimley cheeks' (1.25). A brief digression transports us from the 'heartsome meltith' (1.20) to its healthful effects upon the gudeman, and its effects of old upon his 'doughty' ancestors (1.37) who are pictured fighting triumphantly in the sun's light, 'frae the dawn to set o' sun' (1.40). With the return of the interior scene the 'cheering bicker' goes round and stimulates talk of 'simmer's showery blinks' (11.47-8). As the more light-hearted and visible chatter subsides, the bairnies play mirthfully near the warmth of the fire - 'In rangles round before the ingle's low' (1.59) -, and even the grannie's tales alight on 'the glowing kill' (1.67). Later we almost feel the warm friction of the grannie's spinning through the sibilant s's -'industrious - latest - days' (1.73), 'russet spindle plays' (1.75), 'stent reels she as weel's' (1.75), and so on - as we observe her heart warming 'silent joy' in the grandchild whom she has clothed (11.78-80). Meanwhile the gudeman reclines on a 'warm and canny lean' (1.84); afterwards the gudewife advises watchfulness, lest the cow spill a 'yellow pound' (1.99). Soon after, the 'cruizy' (1.104), 'the restit' ingle (1.105), and the entire household go to sleep awaiting morning's warmth and light, 'the dawning's ruddy glow' (1.108). The structure has moved through a full cycle of light, significantly, in two opposing directions; from the gloaming to morning, and, in reverse, from the full flame of

the ingle to its last evening flicker. Concordia discors has been fulfilled. Furthermore, the Tory ideal of the gudeman follows the Great Chain of dependencies: of the nation upon the farmer, the farmer upon the fruits of the soil, and these upon 'Scotia's simmers' (l.113).

Less than a month before the appearance of "The FARMER'S INGLE", Fergusson published his "ODE to the BEE", also a work on the Tory idea of progress in the country. The "ODE" is more explicitly about the survival of the gudeman[1] through the assimilation of modern methods of cultivation; but it also uses the technique of equating the Tory ideal with the pastoral state and, even more so, makes pastoral accommodate itself to industry and progress. It is another attempt to make those two Enlightenment aims - industry and progress - fit into an historically continuous framework.

Again there is set in opposition civilisation - an industrious pastoral spring cultivated by an act of the will - and winter and poverty, threatening elements that disrupt civilised life and overwhelm human freedom. The thesis of 'industry' is stated in the opening lines, 1-22.

> HERDS, blythsome tune your canty reeds,
> And welcome to the gowany meads
> The pride o' a' the insect thrang,
> A stranger to the green sae lang,
> Unfald ilk buss and ilka brier,
> The bounties o' the gleesome year,
> To him whase voice delights the spring,
> Whase soughs the saftest slumbers bring.
> The trees in simmer-cleething drest,
> The hillocks in their greenest vest,
> The brawest flow'rs rejoic'd we see,
> Disclose their sweets, and ca' on thee,
> Blythly to skim on wanton wing
> Thro' a' the fairy haunts of spring.

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1. We can safely assume that this is a gudeman here as he is neither wealthy enough to be free of the threat of poverty nor poor enough to be a cottar or subsistence farmer.

Whan fields ha'e got their dewy gift,
And dawnin breaks upo' the lift,
Then gang ye're wa's thro' hight and how,
Seek caller haugh or sunny know,
Or ivy'd craig, or burnbank brae,
Whare industry shall bid ye gae,
For hiney or for waxen store,
To ding sad poortith frae your door.

Several presuppositions are put forward here in a very skilful manner indeed. Industry, the industry of the bee, and civilisation are rhetorically brought together as both the bee (ll.3-4, 7, 17, 22) and the natural landscape - a pastoral landscape with the conventional flora of a bounteous spring and piping shepherds, and, at the same time, a very human landscape, 'drest' in summer garb (ll.9-10) - are personified to signalise the controlling hand of man shaping his landscape and his own future. La belle nature, the pastoral ideal, has thus been defined as a cultivated or man-made landscape - so the humanist clothing rhetoric implies - and the bee, endowed with a conscience and a will, can be seen as a farmer working industriously in an Eden contrived by himself. The idea of human effort and responsibility is hinted at in lines 11-14, where the flowers 'ca' on' (l.12) the bee to carry out his labours, and it anticipates the concluding lines of the thesis regarding early morning work (l.16) and the bidding of 'industry' (l.20). In line 22 we have the antithesis of civilisation: a 'poortith', the rhetoric suggests, against which one must fortify himself and do battle; one must 'ding' it away from his 'door', his shelter against the naked elements.

Lines 23-46 develop the notion of conflict with specific relation to the triumph over winter and adversity through planning and industry, and, equally, through stoicism. Man is represented as a 'feckless' (l.23) and 'feeble' (l.33) creature who through wisdom and 'industry' (l.34) - note again that recurring seasonal metaphor - might live out

an endless summer.

> Cou'd feckless creature, man, be wise,
> The simmer o' his life to prize,
> In winter he might fend fu' bald,
> His eild unkend to nippin cald ...
>
> (11.23-26)

But this endless summer must not be mistaken for endless progress or fundamental societal changes. There are two matters taken up which indicate that the Tory ideal is consistent with notions of improvement and industry but not of progress, if that means subverting the social structure. In the same passage that greater production for winter is advised, the poet regrets the activities of 'antrim fock' (1.27) - absentee landlords and speculators -

> That lade their scape wi' winter stock. (1.28)

His concern is instead for the 'poor' (1.30) cultivators of the land.

> Auld age maist feckly glowrs right dour
> Upo' the ailings of the poor,
> Wha hope for nae comforting, save
> That dowie dismal house, the grave.
> Then feeble man, be wise, take tent
> How industry can fetch content:
> Behad the bees whare'er they wing,
> Or thro' the bonny bow'rs of spring,
> Whare vi'lets or whare roses blaw,
> And siller dew-draps nightly fa',
> Or whan on open bent they're seen,
> On hether-bell or thristle green;
> The hiney's still as sweet that flows
> Frae thistle cald or kendling rose.
>
> (11.29-42)

As the last two lines imply, the benefits of improvement are not intended for 'antrim fock', that is, ambitious Whig improvers, as industry is not meant to change the status quo. This would upset the Tory structure, so aptly represented by the society of the bee hive, with its fixed division of labour and social standing: hence the stoical emphasis on 'content' (1.34) and advocacy of indifference as to what flower the bee extracts his pollen from - 'thistle cald or

kendling rose' (1.42), and where he flies to get it - the 'bow'rs of spring' (1.36) or the 'open bent' (1.39). A given bee, like a skilled or unskilled labourer finding his vocation, will intuitively seek pollen where he finds it; some among the more common-place plants in the more common fields; others among the most treasured flowers in better cultivated gardens; in both cases, indeed, through their joint efforts, the end result is honey. A call for greater industry among the poor, then, is really intended to shore up a class of farmers about to be overpowered lest they improve their methods and work hard. Progress in this instance means little more than the perpetuation of the gudeman class.

And it is precisely with survival in mind that the poet speaks as one of the gudemen himself, and as a propagandist among them, concerning his 'labours', 'shrub', 'cell', 'trees' and 'fence': obvious references to the modern methods of enclosure he exhorts them to adopt. In an apostrophe to the bee, whose hive is yet the model to be borne in mind, he speaks of a flowery, poetic spring of freedom and safety from winter winds and from Whig herds 'wi' ruthless spike' (1.55) - so reminiscent of the herds in "THE LEE RIGG" - wrought by the new methods of enclosure, using shrubbery, trees and stone fencing (11.47-58).

> Instructive bee! attend me still,
> O'er a' my labours sey your skill:
> For thee shall hiney-suckles rise,
> With lading to your busy thighs,
> And ilka shrub surround my cell,
> Whareon ye like to hum and dwell:
> My trees in bourachs o'er my ground
> Shall fend ye frae ilk blast o' wind;
> Nor e'er shall herd, wi' ruthless spike,
> Delve out the treasures frae your bike,
> But in my fence be safe, and free
> To live, and work, and sing like me.

As in the earlier lines the bee is both himself, the exemplar of the perfect society - 'Instructive bee' (1.47) - and, we easily imagine with his being on the receiving end of so much protective

fencing, the farmer now happily working behind the safe wall of enclosures. The two bees have come together; in these circumstances man's state is as perfect as the bees'.

That cultivated pastoral landscape of before, which was linked with human industry, has here, then, with 'shrub', 'trees in bourachs' and 'fence' (11.51, 53, 57), been fully brought into the ambit of the Agrarian Revolution, albeit from a very moderate position. Moreover, Fergusson was propounding a familiar Tory solution, put forward some years earlier by a fellow Scots Tory, William Mackintosh, who, having been out in the '15 and in the rising of 1719, published from his prison cell An Essay on Ways and Means for Inclosing, Fallowing, Planting etc. Scotland ... (1729). 'Inclosing, Fallowing, Planting' was, of course, the policy of the Whig agrarian reformers, purportedly for capital and, so they said, utility. What distinguishes this particular essay, then, from other Whig improvers' guides was Mackintosh's concern, like Fergusson's, for the survival of the gudeman. Thus he prefaced his Essay with an appeal to the landlords for longer leases and fewer services to the landowner so that the tenant could properly enclose his land, with hedge and stone fences, and subsist.[1] Again progress and industry were for the Tory the means of adapting an old social structure to higher demands of production.

The bee hive is an emblem not of change but of industry and content. In this connection the "ODE" ends with a tribute not so much to poetry, as it seems, but, rather, to stoicism; to 'fancy' (1.59), the creative imagination which conceives a new Eden, 'That lyart time can ne'er impair' (1.64).

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1. See Handley Scottish Farming, 122-123.

Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the Muse
Scuds ear' and heartsome o'er the dews,
Fu' vogie, and fu' blyth to crap
The winsome flow'rs frae Nature's lap,
Twining her living garlands there,
That lyart time can ne'er impair.

(11.59-64)

It is a pity that Fergusson never lived to carry out his idea of translating the Georgics; we might then have had more fully enunciated statement on change and improvement in the country. "The FARMER'S INGLE" and "ODE to the BEE" describe, figuratively, the paradox of Agrarian progress for Fergusson the Scots Tory. We must add to this his intimate friendship with the famous improver, Dr William Wilkie, the 'Potato Wilkie', to whom the poet dedicated his "AN ECLOGUE, To the Memory of Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE...", for a broader understanding of his position. In a footnote to the "ECLOGUE" Fergusson extols the 'remarkable improvements' Wilkie made on his farm near St Andrews,[1] and, in the poem itself, the gudeman Geordie marvels at how Wilkie's 'mailin thrave, /Ay better faugh'd an' snodit than the lave' and with 'bonny riggs' and 'thrivin hedges' (11.65-6, 69-70). It should not escape our attention that the farmers, Geordie and Davie, are two mouthpieces for the old gudeman class, as Episcopalians preparing for that very un-Presbyterian of holidays, the 'Yule-Feast', (1.14) and superstitious and backward characters of light comedy mesmerised by new farming methods which they take to be Wilkie's formidable powers over nature. Here the message is conveyed through pathos and humour rather than philosophical metaphor.

The Tory meant for the small farmer to endure and to abide where he was; not to be transplanted in the town for the sake of proving utilitarian hypotheses like those of the economist, Sir James Steuart,

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1. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 70", 269.

a lapsed and now coldly cynical Jacobite; who would admire 'Schemes for recalling ancient simplicity ... but not enough to believe them practicable in our degenerate age'; who would assure the farmer that depopulation was the most painless means of making the land more productive and creating more useful employment for those evicted while, at the same time, arguing that a society cannot advocate labour and industry while proscribing its effects.[1] In a more general sense the Tories preferred an agrarian society, and for long identified both the court and the city with Whiggism. The country was preferable to the city, as Smollett has his crabbed Matthew Bramble discover on his journey through the cities of England and Scotland and back, at last, to his native Welsh mountains, to rural felicity in his proper role as the fatherly laird.

Certainly Fergusson's early pastorals were anti-city. This is quite openly stated in his first contribution to Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine, the rather mannered "PASTORAL I. MORNING." which, however, introduces the sophisticated techniques of imagery and form we have observed in his more original verse. Through dialogue and rhymed couplets, both being two part forms; pastoral and counterpastoral, where the first corresponds to the serene life of country retirement, and the second, 'discord' and the 'baneful influence' of the town (l.32), form follows the balanced tensions of the concordia discors model to bolster the Tory views put forward.

The structure itself breaks down into four parts. In the first (ll.1-26) is presented a standard neoclassical pastoral setting: 'cheerful rays' adorn the sky (l.2); 'soaring Larks, and tuneful

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1. Political Oeconomy, I, 76, 97, 107.

Linnets sing' (l.8); the 'zephyr' trembles over fields of 'ripening corn' (l.12); 'sportive lambkins' (l.18) and 'lowing oxen' (l.21) graze contentedly; two shepherds, Damon and Alexis, seek a comfortable spot for a morning of music and verse (l.16).

Hardly have these Arcadian shepherds begun to settle when Edinburgh, Athens of the north, the crowning achievement of Whig culture, meets their eyes.

DAMON

Behold Edina's lofty turrets rise,
Her structures fair adorn the eastern skies;
As Pentland cliffs o'ertop yon distant plain,
So she the cities on our north domain.

(11.27-30)

What follows is a joint repudiation of the town by the shepherds, who have suddenly become more life-like creatures of very local problems and influences.

ALEXIS

Boast not of cities, or their lofty towers,
Where discord all her baneful influence pours;
The homely cottage, and the wither'd tree,
With sweet content shall be preferr'd by me.

DAMON

The Hemlock dire shall please the heifers taste;
Our lands like wild Arabia be waste;
The bee forget to range for winter's food,
'Ere I forsake the forest and the flood.

This intrusion of 'discord' and 'baneful influences' (l.32), rhetoric, as we shall see later, invariably describing the Whig city of chaos, and all the more classifiable as such in its qualifying those 'lofty towers' (l.31), marks an obvious shift from the serenity of the introductory verses. So does the natural imagery. For Damon - as for Willie in "AN ECLOGUE" who dreads changes in the land - forsaking the country would be accompanied by catastrophic reversals in the natural order, denuding the land of animal and vegetable produce;

creating a barren 'waste' (l.36) under conditions 'dire' and 'wild' (11.35-6). The imagery builds up a picture of counterpastoral whereby - and this is the usual humanist metaphor employed - the garden is supplanted by a desert, a desert inhabited by savages. That providential bee from the "ODE to the BEE", symbol of the farmers' survival and of the Tory social order, becomes now a symbol of improvidence (11.37-8), auguring Damon's own demise, should he abandon country for town. The town, Edinburgh, improvement, Whiggery, then, are in opposition to the bee-like society, and are conceived as destroyers of civilisation.

In the remaining sections, lines 39-45 and 55-72, the shepherds forget Edinburgh and, thereby, restore the neoclassical atmosphere of the opening; praying to 'Pan' (1.51) and 'Apollo' (1.55) for their wonted harvest of plenty, and enjoying melodious song (11.39-42) as we see them safely conveyed to 'yon leafy shade', the 'warbling note' of the blackbird, and the 'easy numbers' of Alexis' 'songs' (11.67, 69-71). In all this we see Fergusson the makar using the medium as message: constructing a polarity between pastoral and counterpastoral forms that he will use again and again, and which underlines his equations, Whig = city = chaos, Tory = country = order.

If nothing else, the early pastorals consolidate his use of imagery and form along these lines. The image patterns of, for example, "RETIREMENT" and "The TOWN and COUNTRY CONTRASTED" anticipate his technical achievement on the major works on the city of chaos, city of disease, noise, distorted perceptions, corruption. "RETIREMENT" leads us from a pastoral dream vision to a shepherd's leave-taking of the 'baneful pleasures of the town!' and its 'foibles' (11.17, 19); of the 'giddy and unthinking throng!' (1.18); of 'stony hearts' devoid of pity (11.21, 24); of 'open vice' (1.35), 'Envy, defamation's busy

tongue' (11.39-40), disease (11.43-44) and 'discord' (1.50). In "The TOWN and COUNTRY CONTRASTED." an idyllic country scene is set against Edinburgh; 'the busy town' with its 'noisy bustle' (11.1-2) and 'fishwives noisy screams' (1.20); 'inundations plung'd from ten house height' (1.21); 'slothful slumber' (1.18) and 'sleep infested with the burning sting / Of bug infernal' (11.25-6); 'gloomy vapours', 'irksome pestilence', 'sickness' and 'Death, grim Death! with all his ghastly train' (11.28-9, 30, 32, 41). Throughout the early pastorals the message remains -

> "Ye, who to wisdom would devote your hours,
> "And far from riot, far from discord stray!
> "Look back disdainful on the city's towers,
> "Where pride, where folly point the slipp'ry way.
>
> "Pure flows the limpid stream in chrystal tides,
> "Thro' rocks, thro' dens, and ever verdant vales,
> "Till to the town's unhallow'd wall it glides,
> "Where all its purity and lustre fails.
>
> ("RETIREMENT", 11.49-56).

CHAPTER 4

DISINTEGRATION IN THE COUNTRY

The poems on the Tory ideal were composed alongside works of a less idealistic nature: mordant satires and, occasionally, didactic pieces on the disintegration of that self-same ideal. In his early period, such melancholy Shenstonian exercises as "The DECAY of FRIENDSHIP. A PASTORAL ELEGY", depicting a troubled countryside, in the circumlocutory style of the age, flowed from the poet's pen. As yet, he spoke indirectly, through the image patterns we observed before. On the face of it there is only the nostalgic sentiment of an undeceived and impoverished shepherd (ll.32, 41), who resigns himself to solitude and to emigration, 'To the lone corner of some distant shore' (l.53): something approximating Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" though not of the same calibre technically. Effectively the imagery tells us more than the stereotypical theme. Once more the end of civilisation and the Tory social structure is brought about by forces metaphorically identified with the Whigs. As in the "ODE to the BEE", the shepherd here vividly recalls his lost past in terms of his umbrageous shelter (l.13), the flourishing state of the 'bees' (ll.16, 48) on his grounds, and an enduring pastoral spring of growth, 'merriment and glee' (l.20), 'song' (l.22) and 'contentment' (l.24). He begins his pastoral reflection -

> My pleasant cottage, shelter'd from the gale,
> Arose with moss, and rural ivy bound;
> And scarce a flow'ret in my lowly vale,
> But was with bees of various colours crown'd.
>
> (ll.13-16)

- and, bringing us up to the present, ends it with the former 'fairy scene' as a 'barren wild' (ll.39-40), the season winter, and neither the bees nor the birds able to withstand its severity.

> But when the beauties of the circling year
> In chilling frosts and furious storms decay;
> No more the bees upon the plains appear,
> No more the warblers hail the infant day.
>
> (ll.49-52)

It is only when Fergusson begins composing more regularly in Scots, a freer poetic instrument which was not so hamstrung by neo-classical conventions, that the process of disintegration is defined more directly, and the imagery really brought to bear upon the subject. Those few satires on superfluities in the country are, in this connection, exemplary.

"AN ECLOGUE" is one of the poet's earliest satires responding to the exuberances of Hume and his associates, who insisted that 'men sink into indolence, lose all enjoyment of life' where there is no demand for superfluities.[1] Sir James Steuart went so far as to maintain that increased consumption had 'banished misery from cottages and country villages' while giving rise to frugality, as the peasants judiciously saved for those desirable luxuries - ribbons and the like - they required.[2] "AN ECLOGUE" humorously dramatises a different view of increased consumption.

"AN ECLOGUE" represents the crowning achievement of the mid-eighteenth century satirical, rationalist pastoral. Part of its success lies in the reworking of old material. The subject itself, of bridal problems, was well worn. It had been popularised by Tom D'Urfey ("The Scotch Cuckold", Wit and Mirth, I, 254-55), Ramsay (Gentle Shepherd, "Act I, Scene II"), Ross (The Fortunate Shepherdess, "Canto I", ll.315-402), and, nearer to Fergusson's own time, by

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1. "Of Refinement in the Arts", Rotwein Hume Economics, 24. Cf. Sir James Steuart Political Oeconomy, I, 166-67.
2. Lanark, V, 289, 294.

Alexander Nicol[1] ("A Pastoral between Colin, Willie and Deavy, upon Baledgarno's Marriage", RURAL MUSE). Nicol's "SONG XVII - The Auld Goodman" (POEMS) actually sketches a farmer exactly like Sandie: enslaved by his wife and plagued by her 'vile tongue' (p.39).

But Fergusson's poem goes far beyond these works in the scope of its subject matter, concerning contemporary rural affairs, and in the sophisticated use of form and imagery, which turns the rationalist pastoral back upon itself as a criticism of the impossible ideals it had come to represent. In essence it says, rural life is not ideal; it is in a state of rapid decline; the society of "The FARMERS'S INGLE" no longer exists, even in the imagination. This is, of course, a serious matter for Fergusson who, as a humanist artist, was attempting to remake the ideal world through his art in form and image - like God, creating order out of chaos[2] - and betrays something of his receding mental balance we mentioned before with relation to the pastoral of the self. The poem should be classified as a less affected, more objective, version of that Deserted Village theme, where, as Raymond Williams phrases it, a 'melancholy consciousness of change and loss' is so apparent.[3]

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1. Originally a packman, like his father before him, Nicol educated himself well enough to become a teacher in Abernyte, Perthshire. He is yet another one of those suppressed poets, published in several Edinburgh editions, who was Episcopalian in religion - as he says -

   Yet, most of all, I do incline
   The old Episcopalian line ....
   ("An Account of the AUTHOR", POEMS, p.3)

   - and Jacobite in politics. The important collections of his works are THE RURAL MUSE (Edinburgh 1753) and POEMS ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS (Edinburgh 1766).

2. Martin C. Battestin discusses this idea at some length with specific reference to the humanists in England and Ireland, Pope, Gay and Swift, particularly. The Providence of Wit (Oxford 1974) 119-20, 128, 139-40, 146-47, 224.

3. The Country and The City (London 1973) 61, 72-3.

> Even now the devastation is begun,
> And half the business of destruction done;
> Even now methinks, as pondering here I stand,
> I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
> (11.395-98)[1]

Lines 1-16 set the stage for the criticism of pastoral in the immediate statement of thesis and antithesis. Smooth, regular metrics usher in the first verse paragraph which, in its static picture of two shepherds beneath a sturdy oak, prepares us for a neoclassical love complaint. However, heavy accents falling on 'Yence' (11.9, 11) break the metrical flow and, when added to the satirical folk idioms, like 'as leive maist lend my lugs' (1.13), and the image of the puddocks, cancel out the serene poetic effect of the carefully chosen gh and open vowel sounds of the introduction.

> TWAS e'ening whan the spreckled gowdspink sang,
> Whan new-fa'an dew in blobs o' chrystal hang;
> Than Will and Sandie thought they'd wrought eneugh,
> And loos'd their sair toil'd owsen frae the pleugh:
> Before they ca'd their cattle to the town,
> The lads to draw thir breath e'en sat them down:
> To the stiff sturdy aik they lean'd their backs,
> While honest Sandie thus began the cracks.
>
> SANDIE
>
> Yence I could hear the laverock's shrill-tun'd throat,
> And listen to the clattering gowdspink's note;
> Yence I could whistle cantilly as they,
> To owsen, as they till'd my raggit clay;
> But now I wou'd as leive maist lend my lugs
> To tuneless puddocks croakin i' the boggs;
> I sigh at hame, a-field am dowie too,
> To sowf a tune I'll never crook my mou.

This unsettling intervention of satire into the pastoral setting, this antagonism between what the conventional pastoralist would have us believe and what a country bumpkin who inhabits the landscape tells us, is one method through which the poem deprecates the rationalist

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1. From Collected Works Of Oliver Goldsmith, edit. by Arthur Friedman (5 vols, Oxford 1966) IV.

pastoral as invalid. At the same time judicious use of metrical variation and enjambment in the dialogue vivifies the contrast of an idealised past with a troubled present. Observe how the accent falls heavily upon the temporal adverbs 'Yence' (ll.9, 11), 'bygane' (l.18), 'before' (l.60), 'first' and 'lang sin syne' (ll.83, 85), as against that key word 'now' (ll.13, 22, 43, 59, 61).

Lines 17-56 are purportedly a dialogue about the bridal, in the fashion of Ramsay's pastoral drama The Gentle Shepherd, "Act I. Scene I", Patie's advice to Roger on his courtship of Jenny: in the fashion of Ramsay, we should say, but for one detail: the imagery.

WILLIE

Foul fa me gif your bridal had na been
Nae langer bygane than sin Hallow-e'en,
I cou'd hae tell'd you but a warlock's art,
That some daft lightlyin quean had stow'n your heart;
Our beasties here will take their e'ening pluck,
An' now sin Jock's gane hame the byres to muck,
Fain wou'd I houp my friend will be inclin'd
To gie me a' the secrets o' his mind:
Heh! Sandie, had, what dool's come owr ye now,
That you to whistle ne'er will crook your mou.

SANDIE

Ah! Willie, Willie, I may date my wae
Frae what beted me on my bridal day;
Sair may I rue the hour in which our hands
Were knit thegither in the haly bands;
Sin that I thrave sae ill, in troth I fancy,
Some fiend or fairy, nae sae very chancy,
Has driven me by pauky wiles uncommon,
To wed this flyting fury of a woman.

WILLIE

Ah! Sandie, aften hae I heard you tell,
Amang the lasses a' she bure the bell;
And say, the modest glances o' her ein
Far dang the brightest beauties o' the green;
You ca'd her ay sae innocent, sae young,
I thought she kent na how to use her tongue.

SANDIE

Before I married her, I'll take my aith,
Her tongue was never louder than her breath;
But now its turn'd sae souple and sae bauld,
That Job himsell cou'd scarcely thole the scauld.

WILLIE

Lat her yelp on, be you as calm's a mouse,
Nor lat your whisht be heard into the house;
Do what she can, or be as loud's she please,
Ne'er mind her flytes but set your heart at ease,
Sit down and blaw your pipe, nor faush your thumb,
An' there's my hand she'll tire, and soon sing dumb;
Sooner shou'd winter cald confine the sea,
An' lat the sma'est o' our burns rin free;
Sooner at Yule-day shall the birk be drest,
Or birds in sapless busses big their nest,
Before a tonguey woman's noisy plea
Shou'd ever be a cause to dantan me.

Three intrusive images filter through the discussion here undercutting, by their suggestiveness, the lighthearted vein and changing the course of the satire away from rural matrimonial antics and towards a more serious deflation of the farmer.

In a seemingly indifferent manner the 'beasties', due to graze (l.21), enter the conversation as an aside. If we keep in mind the presence of farm animals in the dialogue, the periphrasis Sandie uses for 'bridal' - 'knit thegither in haly bands' (l.30) - takes on interesting associations. So does his superstitious fancy that something 'Has driven me' to wed (ll.33-4). Sandie is not only revealing his character but also damning himself by his own determinist rhetoric, which puts him into the exact position of one of his own farm animals; for 'bridal', as it is used here, recalls an animal's bridle, made by man - 'knit thegither' - and employed like 'bands' for restraining and driving. Anapaests too accentuate a driving effect in the verse paragraph: 'on my bridal day', 'in the haly bands' (ll.28, 30). These effects are, of course, unconscious on Sandie's part, and that is

exactly what we are intended to notice. If we add these rhetorical effects to Sandie's superstitious fear of fiends and fairies (ll.32-3), the sum total of his character amounts to a pawn, a victim, the traditional comic figure of pathos. Yet the tone has kept a playful character. Or has it? Sandie has actually gone beyond comparing himself to his animals but contrast himself with them in a serious moral way by humanist standards. Almost the sole purpose of human experience for the humanist is for man to elevate himself above the beasts - or the bestial side of his nature left him after the fall. Through deliberation and choice, he must make a civilisation of the jungle within and around him, restoring himself to his rightful place on the moral scale. Beast rhetoric is always used by the humanist for deflationary purposes. Fergusson often develops Sandie's contrast to highlight modern man's loss of control over his destiny, as in "HAME CONTENT. A SATIRE" (ll.45-52) or "The RISING of the SESSION." (ll.11-12). Though 'sair' from toil, the owsen are 'loos'd' from the plow earlier (l.4) and graze freely (l.21) while Sandie, their master, himself described as 'sair' (l.29), is permanently bridled. Sandie, by contrast, then, is beneath the dignity of his animals, and that is a serious spiritual and intellectual matter.

'Now', he declares in lines 43-4, tying together more determinist images, his plight verges on that of 'Job' (l.44). This further intrusion into the imagery jars, hardly sitting well with Willie's pastoral romantic banter on Sandie's spouse's modesty, innocence and quiet disposition (ll.35-40). For Job had been the subject of numerous paraphrases,[1] usually very grave ones, by the poets of melancholy, like

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1. The tradition was well represented in Scotland, prior to Fergusson's "JOB, CHAP III. PARAPHRASED.", by Lord Hailes' Sacred Poems: Or, A Collection Of Translations and Paraphrases (Edinburgh 1751).

Young and even Fergusson himself, as a symbol of powerlessness in the face of external forces. Furthermore, in lines 51-56 Sandie visualises chaotic reversals in nature that might occur before he would submit to an overbearing wife: 'winter' confining the sea, unimpeded 'burns', birches flowering at Christmas, birds building weak nests. This too is morally serious. If nature is an expression of God's art[1] and a mirror of the Tory social order or, more broadly, of humanist civilisation, then it follows that Sandie, the pawn, who knows not what he says, is speaking of fundamental changes somehow related to his marriage. And again that recurring image of chaotic Whig supremacy - 'winter' - colours the overall tone, as does that shelter symbol of declining civilisation: nests built without sap. What has occurred in these lines is that the imagery has become more important than the matter at hand. This is intentional. As we shall see later, the marriage issue is only a vehicle for introducing the larger discussion of social change or, looking at the bridal more theoretically, of the farmer's marriage with a new system that controls him. Here it is felt in these persistent images; later it will be pathetically reflected upon.

What this section reveals is a dialectic of change, perhaps unconscious change, in the poet. He too appears to be reacting to the processes which he describes. The pastoral form as handed down by Ramsay was to be a straightforward, if sympathetic, satire of rural life, its problems, foibles and beliefs. The parallel sections to these lines, for example, in The Gentle Shepherd deal with forces like superstition which narrow the rustics' understanding; forces that

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1. This was one of the common tenets of the humanists. See Battestin Providence of Wit, 146-47.

are self-activated through ignorance and pettiness. In Ramsay's play the good Sir William stands by as the corrective both in fact and in the moral tone of the satire.

> What silly Notions crowd the clouded Mind,
> That is thro' want of Education blind!
>
> ("Act V. Scene I", ll.56-7)

Fergusson's images conjure up problems that are far more intellectually weighted and not so easily dismissed. The loss of control is more threatening and genuine, and less self-inflicted. When taken with the next section, the humour, derived, like Galt's Annals Of The Parish, from characters betraying their total blindness to the whole system of agrarian change working upon them, devolves into pathos.

Lines 57-100 effect the transition from the catalogue of marital problems, not unlike those foreseen by Jenny in The Gentle Shepherd ("Act I. Scene II"), to the more realistic matter of social breakdown in the country, resulting from the introduction of superfluities. With this Fergusson reaches back to the older humanist tradition of anti-luxury poems; again to the works of the early Revivalists, as in "The Speech of a Fife Laird, Newly come from the Grave" on 'My Lady's Prodigalitie' (Watson's Choice Collection, I, ll.153-178).

SANDIE

> Weel cou'd I this abide, bot oh! I fear
> I'll soon be twin'd o' a' my warldly gear;
> My kirnstaff now stands gizzand at the door,
> My cheese-rack toom that ne'er was toom before;
> My ky may now rin rowtin to the hill,
> And on the nakit yird their milkness spill;
> She seenil lays her hand upon a turn,
> Neglects the kebbuck, and forgets the kirn;
> I vow my hair-mould milk would poison dogs,
> As it stands lapper'd in the dirty cogs.
> Before the seed I sell'd my ferra cow,
> An wi' the profit coft a stane o' woo:
> I thought, by priggin, that she might hae spun

A plaidie, light, to screen me frae the sun;
But though the siller's scant, the cleedin dear,
She has na ca'd about a wheel the year.
Last ouk but ane I was frae hame a day,
Buying a threave or twa o' bedding strae:
O' ilka thing the woman had her will,
Had fouth o' meal to bake, and hens to kill:
But hyn awa' to Edinbrough scoured she
To get a making o' her fav'rite tea;
And 'cause I left her not the weary clink,
She sell't the very trunchers frae my bink.

WILLIE

Her tea! ah! war betide sic costly gear,
Or them that ever wad the price o't spear.
Sin my auld gutcher first the warld knew,
Fouk had na fund the Indies, whare it grew.
I mind mysell, it's nae sae lang sin syne,
Whan Auntie Marion did her stamack tyne,
That Davs our gardiner came frae Apple-bogg,
An' gae her tea to tak by way o' drog.

SANDIE

Whan ilka herd for cauld his fingers rubbs,
An' cakes o' ice are seen upo' the dubbs;
At morning, whan frae pleugh or fauld I come,
I'll see a braw reek rising frae my lum,
An' ablins think to get a rantin blaze
To fley the frost awa' an' toast my taes;
But whan I shoot my nose in, ten to ane
If I weelfardly see my ane hearthstane;
She round the ingle with her gimmers sits,
Crammin their gabbies wi' her nicest bits,
While the gudeman out-by maun fill his crap
Frae the milk coggie, or the parritch cap.

With the brief moaning over tea the satire becomes very direct, without the corrective of Ramsay's Sir William. In it Willie too manages to turn the satire on himself, on his imperviousness to the forces at work. It is he who, in lines 81-4, places the 'Yence' and 'now' tension into an historical perspective, drawing an unperceived contrast between Sandie's wife's demands for tea and superfluities, and the end of an older way of rural life, before the Indies had become a major trading centre. With these lines we are closer to the more genuine, if nostalgic, sociological and political poems of the period, like Nicol's "An Elegy on Auld Use and Wont".

We sought nae foreign wines nor tea,
Nor rum nor brandy, o'er the sea ...

While Wont winn'd here a living wife,
Our goud and silder were as rife
As coals are in the shire of Fife:
But sin she's dead,
There's mony leads a silly life,
Right scant o' bread.

(Rural Muse, p.14)

Moreover, Willie's notion of tea as a 'drog'[1] (l.88) considered together with his almost incidental mention of 'the Indies' (l.84) exaggerates ignorance to a high degree. Willie is a total figure of pathos, who does not perceive the obvious links between tea, the more recent commerce with the Indies, and something of the changes Sandie complains of. Economic and social forces all about him do not penetrate his observation.

Additionally, the pawning of the household 'trunchers' (l.80) grates against the mischievous antics of the wife's headlong flight to Edinburgh for her favourite tea. It is decidedly a more brutal form of humour and, in humanist terms, where artefacts represent the human condition, betokens the piecemeal break-up of the home and family. The gudeman's unnatural debarring from his home while his wife and 'gimmers' enjoy their 'nicest bits' (ll.97-100) makes him appear ridiculous.[2] Ridiculous, yes, but also ineffectual, pitiful. We are drawn with this back to the image of nature reversed; winter confined by the sea, and birds building their own insubstantial homes with 'sapless busses' (l.54). Of course, the gudeman is linked to the image of the birds, if there were any doubt of the association,

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1. Tea had been thought a drug earlier in the century but not so much in Sandie's day. See Memoirs Of ... Sir John Clerk Of Penicuik, 77.

2. Cf. Lady Nairne "The Women are a' gane wud".

in having to fill his 'crap' (l.99) - a bird's craw or stomach - outside his home. It is a tribute to Fergusson's skill that the fluency and vividness of his humour through the dialogue of these lines mask the systematic disintegration of the Tory ideal and, in so doing, reaffirm the point he has been making all along: that the Ramsayesque pastoral model of the country, with its deus ex machina answer to problems, is a mere façade beneath and behind which lies a crumbling foundation. What we have beneath the façade is a "FARMER'S INGLE" in reverse, the absolute overturning of the ideals set forth in that poem. Where in the "FARMER'S INGLE" we saw a paragon of balanced industry, economy, and social linkage - a microcosmic rendering of the Tory cosmos, there is in these lines a whole chain of imbalances: the gudewife who, breaking away from her wonted industry, ceases to do her household chores, to cook and to bake, to regulate the farm, to spin for the family and, perhaps, like the gudame of "The FARMER'S INGLE" (ll.73-81), to do her 'e'enin stent' for extra money (ll.57-80); the 'ky' who 'on the nakit yird their milkness spill' (l.62), unlike those, whose production is exactly reckoned and who are carefully watched lest they spill 'a kebbuck nice, or yellow pound' ("The FARMER'S INGLE), l.99); the 'ferra cow' the profit from which came to nought (ll.67-72); that shelter ideally conceived in Sandie's mind - 'a braw reek', 'a rantin blaze', a welcome 'hearthstane' and 'ingle' (ll.92-3, 96-7, cf. "The FARMER'S INGLE", ll.10-21) - from which he, the head of the household, is locked out in the cold without the warmth of a 'plaidie' (l.70) or a decent meal while the new social circle of his wife and 'gimmers' enjoy their 'nicest bits' (ll.98-100); the gudeman like an animal, a frail bird, devoid of free will, without that power to control and

enclose the landscape rather than to be enclosed by it.

Willie's parethetical comments on the laird, in the conclusion (ll.101-116), draw our attention to another of the sources of his pathetic victimisation.

WILLIE

> Sandie, gif this were ony common plea,
> I shou'd the lealest o' my counsel gie;
> But mak or meddle betwixt man and wife,
> Is what I never did in a' my life.
> It's wearin on now to the tail o' May,
> An' just between the bear seed and the hay;
> As lang's an orrow morning may be spar'd,
> Stap your wa's east the haugh, an' tell the laird;
> For he's a man weel vers'd in a' the laws,
> Kens baith their outs and ins, their cracks and flaws,
> An' ay right gleg, whan things are out o' joint,
> At sattlin o' a nice or kittle point.
> But yonder's Jock, he'll ca' your owsen hame,
> And tak thir tidings to your thrawart dame,
> That ye're awa' ae peacefu' meal to prie,
> And take your supper kail or sowens wi' me.

The point is, the age-old extended family of laird and tenant had been breaking down as the country gentry sought a new alliance with the town lawyers.[1] Indeed much Scots humanist poetry before Fergusson concerns this alliance and the subsequent neglect of the tenants. William Lithgow, the seventeenth century poet, devotes an entire section of "Scotlands Welcome to Her Native Sonne, And Soveraigne Lord, King Charles" to the 'Lairds, and Lawyers, Scriviners' who 'flock together', 'charge and flit their Tennants as they please', leaving them to 'cold and hunger' and desolation. "The Speech of a Fife Laird, Newly come from the Grave" is, in the main, about the 'Supplantation' of the old laird by the 'Lawyers Congregation' (ll.61-2).

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1. See especially T.C. Smout's discussion on the special relationship of laird and tenant in Scotland; also his discussion of the new alliance of lawyers and country gentry. "The Landowner and the Planned Village in Scotland 1730-1830", Scotland in the Age of Improvement, 77; History of Scottish People, 350.

Alexander Nicol, the poet's most immediate and important predecessor, dedicated his Rural Muse (1753) and Poems On Several Subjects (1766) to a laird whose tenants' happiness is 'envy'd by all others'. The works themselves often concentrate on the severing of the traditional relationship.[1] The following passage from "The Broken Laird Repair'd Or The Dyvour turn'd a Thriver" is a typical example of Nicol's handling of law as the corrupt intruder.

> Long since in our ancestors time,
> When USE-AND-WONT was in her prime,
> She was like to a statute book
> On which the nation all did look;
> And every one was deem'd a fool,
> That acted ought beyond the rule:
> Then was no need for bills nor bands;
> All bargains stood by shaking hands:
> Then was no tacks on tenements;
> Each paid their ancient usual rents:
> None would adventure for his neck
> His neighbours's tenement to take:
> None ent'ries paid for their possessions,
> And none complained of oppressions.
> And if they had, as neighbours will,
> By virtue of the other gill,
> Or sitting long beside the barrel,
> About some trifle bred a quarrel,
> And rais'd the topick to such height
> As made them rise, perhaps, and fight;
> And may be, with their rackless blows,
> Broke others heads, or bled their nose:
> Yet of AULE-WONT they stood such aw,
> That they durst never go to law;
> But the next day, when sober men,
> They took a pint and 'gree'd again.
>
> ——
>
> But foreigners did us corrupt,
> And our own customs we gave up,
> And brought us fashions from abroad,
> That to us at the first seem'd odd;
> Yet we embrac'd them at the last,
> And USE-AND-WONT away we cast.
>
> (Rural Muse, pp.100-01)

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1. See for example "On Captain Balnave's Return From Holland" and "The Petition of Alexander Nicol ... to the Honourable Sir William Nairn of Dunsinnan Baronet", Rural Muse.

Law simply had no place in traditional human relationships. The laird Sandie and Willie seek is hardly another of Ramsay's Sir Williams, 'Return'd to chear his wishing Tenants Sight' (Gentle Shepherd, "Act III. Scene IV", l.19); far less the God-like protector of D'Urfey's "A Scotch Song, Sung by Mrs. Willis at the Theatre", due 'Our Respect as well as Fear' (Wit and Mirth, VI, 17-18); or the gentle 'Master' (p.20) of Alexander Robertson of Struan's "The INVITATION" who provides for the physical and spiritual needs of his tenants. Corydon no longer can importune Timanthes to set matters right, as in "PASTORAL II. NOON". This is the point. The supreme irony of the concluding lines is Willie's palpable inability to resolve this or any other legal matter by his boastful use of 'common plea' or 'counsel' (ll.101-02) and his ostentation in recognising the laird's skills in law.

Overall, Fergusson departs from what was expected of this genre of Scots pastoral in his tone and content, which are normally associated with the poetry of melancholy. In its dual edged satire, its mixed tone and imagery, "AN ECLOGUE" lays bare tensions within the artist himself. No doubt Fergusson began hoping to emulate Ramsay but could not bring himself to write a frivolous piece on simple-minded rustics; not in the midst of agrarian upheavals that would sweep away the gudeman for all time. His satire redounds not upon the clown so much as upon the laird, who controlled the destiny of the ignorant and realised only too clearly the outcome of his actions.

Written later in the same year, 1773, "A DRINK ECLOGUE" transports us from lowlands to the Highlands where the effect of superfluities was equally ruinous as the tacksman system gave way to

improvement in husbandry.[1] Commercial relationships now, Dr Johnson astutely observes, dictate a new social structure.

> The chiefs, divested of their prerogatives, necessarily turned their thoughts to the improvement of their revenues, and expect more rent as they have less homage.[2]

In a more lyrical vein, the Scots antiquary and poet, the Honourable Henry Erskine, also writing in 1773, speaks in the tacksman's voice of new absentee lairds and improvers, and of the poverty and exile wrought by them on their helpless tenants.

> "But alas, sad change! those blessed days are o'er,
> "And peace, content, and safety charm no more.
> "Another lord now rules those wide domains,
> "The avaricious tyrant of the plains,
> "Far, far, from hence he revels life away,
> "In guilty pleasures, our poor means must pay.
> "The mossy plains, the mountains' barren brow,
> "Must now be tortur'd by the tearing plough,
> "And spite of nature, crops be taught to rise
> "Which to these northern climes wise Heav'n denies,
> "In vain, with the sweating brow and weary hands,
> "We strove to earn the gold our lord demands,
> "While cold and hunger, and the dungeon's gloom,
> "Await our failure as its certain doom.
>
> ("The Emigrant. A Poem", Glasgow, p.5)

Fergusson's rendering, it must be allowed, avoids these Goldsmith-like touches while probing the current economic theories on superfluities. His choice of brandy as a subject was itself apt in this respect. In the more widely acclaimed Whig treatises on economics brandy was always put forward as a panacea for ridding the country of indolence. In a chapter entitled "Consequences of the Introduction of a passive Foreign Trade among a People who live in Simplicity and Idleness", Sir James Steuart, for instance, avers that a new demand for brandy will induce the farmer to part with the

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1. See Smout History of Scottish People, 281; Hamilton Economic History, 13.
2. A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland (London 1775) 216-17.

family loaf of bread and - what is really the crux of the matter - to labour harder to recoup that loss.[1] This was modern scientific Whiggism. The earlier position - in the poem, Whisky the Tory's opinion - stretched back at least to 1681, to the "Mature and Digested Proclamation" issued by the Committee of Trade in Scotland under the Duke of York (James VII). It states

> ... that the additions foresaids upon Wine, Brandy, Tobacco, Mumbeer and other Forraign Beer and Ale, is only in compensation of the Detriment our Customs and Excise does suffer by the saids Prohibitions ...[2]

In "A DRINK ECLOGUE" both sides meet in a verbal duel, with the older opinion prevailing in the end. Whisky, the 'cottar lown' (l.9) stands for the old Tory partisan remonstrating,

> The warld's now chang'd, its no like use and wont;[3]
> For here, wae's me! there's nouther lord nor laird
> Come to get heartscad frae their stamack skair'd ...
>
> (ll.26-8)

He has in mind particularly the new absentee lairds (ll.47-8) who have wrought havoc upon gudeman and cottar alike. In their demand for foreign goods these 'fools newfangle fain' (l.47), Whisky avows, oppress the tenants and force emigration, burning - he refers to 'black burning shame' (l.55) - the cottages and clearing the land for more lucrative prospects.

> For now our Gentles gabbs are grown sae nice,
> At thee they toot, an' never speer my price:
> Witness - for thee they hight their tenants rent,
> And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent;

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1. Political Oeconomy, I, 167-68. It must be added that though he was originally a Tory, Sir James, like so many disillusioned Jacobites after the '45, came to adopt and to represent the Whig position.
2. Quoted in Insh The Scottish Jacobite Movement 39.
3. This is an obvious allusion to Nicol's "An Elegy on Auld Use and Wont"; especially to the tenant who reflects,
   > Our Landlords didnae grudge to see
   > Their tenants thrive, grow rich and free ... (Rural Muse, p.13)

Gar them o'er seas for cheaper mailins hunt,
An' leave their ain as bare's the Cairn-o'-mount.

(11.63-8)

As a direct result Whisky has become one of the newly disposed Highlanders of the city, one of the 'PORTERS, chairmen, CITY-GUARD' (1.10), the 'cairds' (1.43) and social cast-offs whom Brandy derides. Whisky voices the plight of the country; Brandy the destiny of the city. After reminiscing on his former life 'near pauky courts' and among 'COURTIERS' (11.13, 15), Brandy now allies himself with the Whig city of chaos, 'Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks' (1.21), and, especially, with its supra-structure, the modern Athens, where, Whisky states ironically, he will 'nae langer dwall beneath the ground' (1.36) but 'hear/The patriot's THRAPPLE' (11.31-2). Brandy is an arch Whig. As Matthew McDiarmid mentions in his notes to the poem, "'Court' and 'patriot' were terms of opposition in the early part of the reign of George III., the Whigs assuming to themselves a monopoly of patriotism - for 'patriotism' Fergusson would have agreed (for once) with Dr Johnson in substituting 'scoundrelism'".[1] Likewise, Brandy who talks of 'breeding' (11.11, 44), and his courtships of the 'dowy fair' (1.14), and threatens to 'CHALLENGE' Whisky to a duel but for the sake of 'honour' (1.41), departs himself like the fictional men of feeling, that is, like a staunch Whig, as sentimentalism was an offshoot of Whiggism. The one-time courtier, the city dweller, the sentimentalist, the patriot, Brandy is on his way back up the social ladder. Under the capitalist lairds he can see that higher proceeds of the land will guarantee his presence with other delicacies on the tables of the wealthy.

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1. Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 31-34", 313.

But waes heart for you! that for ay maun dwell
In poet's garret, or in chairman's cell,
While I shall yet on bien-clad tables stand,
Bouden wi' a' the daintiths o' the land.

(11.93-6)

The central section anchors the flyting in the very real economic controversy of the time. There is the Whig argument from the alleged indolence and profligacy of the Highland poor, the rationale behind Steuart's opinions above and here uttered by Brandy, who holds complacency, not the presence of superfluities, responsible for ending thrift and industry and causing poverty.

BRANDY

Tho' lairds take toothfu's o' my warming sap,
This dwines nor tenants gear, nor cows their crap:
For love to you, there's mony a tenant gaes
Bare-ars'd and barefoot o'er the Highland braes:
For you nae mair the thrifty gudewife sees
Her lasses kirn, or birze the dainty cheese;
CRUMMIE nae mair for Jenny's hand will crune
Wi' milkness dreeping frae her teats adown:
For you o'er ear' the ox his fate partakes,
And fa's a victim to the bludey aix.

(11.69-78)

Whisky's counter thrust is that delicacies depopulate 'like a pestilence'.[1] His metaphor suggests a rape of the countryside by Brandy and social ostracism for his helpless victims.

WHISKY

Wha is't that gars the greedy Bankers prieve
The MAIDEN'S tocher, but the MAIDEN'S leave:
By you when spulzied o' her charming pose,
She tholes in turn the taunt o' cauldrife joes;
Wi' skelps like this fock sit but seenil down
To wether-gammond or how-towdy brown;
Sair dung wi' dule, and fley'd for coming debt,
They gar their mou'-bits wi' their incomes mett,
Content eneugh gif they ha'e wherewithal
Scrimply to tack their body and their saul.

(11.79-88)

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1. Surprisingly, the simile was penned by Lord Kames, another lapsed Episcopalian, who at times spoke like a true Tory. Sketches, I. 58-9.

Both arguments paint a grim picture of life in the Highlands. And through the double-entendre on spirit running throughout "A DRINK ECLOGUE", and most effectively used in Whisky's conversation, Fergusson explains why a pastoral vision is no longer possible. Whisky recollects that he once offered, but is no longer permitted to offer, spiritual integration (ll.57-61), 'Where now men Scrimply' endeavour 'to tack their body and their saul' (l.88). He used to 'heat the skin,/And set the saul upon a merry pin' (ll.59-60) thus bringing body and soul together in harmony. At the same time he reminds Brandy that he had once been the afflatus of pastoral poets, 'the poet's flame' (l.97), who made Ramsay's 'chaunter' breath 'Life to the saul' (ll.99-100).

WHISKEY

> Troth I ha'e been 'ere now the poet's flame,
> And heez'd his sangs to mony blythsome theme.
> Wha was't gar'd ALLIE'S chaunter chirm fu' clear,
> Life to the saul, and music to the ear ...
>
> (ll.97-100)

Moreover, at this time, while Whisky and Ramsay prospered, early in the century, before superfluities and agrarian change ravaged the Highlands, pastoral was imaginable. Speaking of Ramsay's verse, Whisky continues,

> Nae stream but kens, and can repeat the lay
> To shepherds streekit on the simmer brae,
> Wha to their whistle wi' the lav'rock bang,
> To wauken flocks the rural fields amang.
>
> (ll.101-04)

Brandy's predicted ascendancy, through a weary hole 'Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks' (l.21), rhetorically, the Whig city in humanist poetry, signals a characteristic deflection of Fergussons's, away from these idyllic scenes to the city of chaos. Just as he implied in "AN ECLOGUE" an imaginative vision like Ramsay's

can no longer be. Recall that Brandy now places the poet and the chairman, both social misfits, on an equal footing.

> But waes heart for you! that for ay maun dwell
> In poet's garret, or in chairman's cell ...
>
> (11.93-4)

Each has lost his rural fields: the Highlander in actual fact; the poet in his imagination.

The excursus into the imaginative past closes with the Landlady's swipe at oppressive English taxation (1.112), a common Scots Tory complaint. If Scots Whisky suffers as a result of high taxes, there is its implied relation to the ousted tacksman class to which it belongs. The blame for depopulation is, thereby, laid in part upon English pressures, just as it had been in Nicol's "The Broken Laird Repair'd".

> Landlords oppress'd by government
> Make them again rax out their rent
> Their tenants to oppress; and they
> Cause their sub-tenants to obey,
> And serve with rigour at command,
> Like Israelites in Egypt land:
> Like them the overburden'd cry
> To heav'n against their tyranny.
>
> (Rural Muse, "Canto I", p.75)[1]

The Landlady has the last say in condemning Brandy and the inversion of social order he has brought, where the roles of master and servant are exchanged and old loyalties sundered.

> Will you your breeding threep, ye mongrel loun!
> Frae hame-bred liquor dy'd to colour brown?
> So FLUNKY braw, whan drest in master's claise,
> Struts to Auld Reikie's cross on sunny days,
> Till some auld comerade, ablins out o' place,
> Near the vain upstart shaws his meagre face;
> Bumbaz'd he loups frae sight, and jooks his ken,
> Fley'd to be seen amang the tassel'd train.
>
> (11.115-22)

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1. Cf. Arbuthnot John Bull, 50.

We argued earlier that free will and man's control over nature are key humanist issues which appear as common motifs in several of the poems. In point of fact they were not only humanist issues at the time. Nicolas Phillipson maintains that the 'ideological norm of polite culture between 1750 and 1780' was determinism.[1] Adam Ferguson, to cite one of the central spokesmen on the issue, wavered from a belief in the inherent 'blindness' of man in moulding his future to the importance of sentient exertions of will. Adam Smith believed prosperity independent of the will. Another economist and forerunner of Smith's, Sir James Steuart, however, described the transition to the modern era as a shift from physical to mental slavery, where the individual was enslaved by his own wants.[2]

As the matter was deliberated again and again in the philosophical texts of the period, determinism and free will eventually became the suff of popular literature. Phillipson states that John Home and Henry Mackenzie popularised determinist philosophy in their literary works, usually in the form of a Sophoclean revelation that men can do no more than understand the inevitable.[3] These were, of course, Whiggish sentiments; little more than a variation on the Presbyterian predestination theme. Fergusson, the Tory humanist, who was made of sterner stuff, nearly always admitted the active role of free will; at his most pessimistic, at least allowed for a determined and active stoicism.

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1. "Towards a Definition of the Scottish Enlightenment", City & Society in the 18th Century, edit. by P. Fritz and D. Williams (Toronto 1973) 136-37.

2. Ferguson Civil Society, 122; Principles Of Moral And Political Science (2 vols, Edinburgh 1792) I, 202; Smith Wealth of Nations, 529; Steuart Political Oeconomy, I, 51.

3. "Towards a Definition of the Scottish Enlightenment", 141.

His views on determinism are most clearly set forth in the "ODE to the GOWDSPINK", another of the rural poems on the changing laird. The "ODE" looks at determinism in two different lights: one being nature's influence upon man and creation in general, and the other, society's influence upon him. Lines 1-20 examine nature's powers.

> FRAE fields whare SPRING her sweets has blawn
> Wi' caller verdure o'er the lawn,
> The GOWDSPINK comes in new attire,
> The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,
> That, 'ere the sun can clear his ein,
> Wi' glib notes sane the simmer's green.
> Sure NATURE herried mony a tree,
> For spraings and bonny spats to thee:
> Nae mair the rainbow can impart
> Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
> Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
> On thee the sey-piece o' her skill.
> Nae mair thro' Straths in simmer dight
> We seek the ROSE to bless our sight;
> Or bid the bonny wa'flowers sprout
> On yonder RUIN'S lofty snout.
> They shining garments far outstrip
> The cherries upo' HEBE'S lip,
> And fool the tints that Nature chose
> To busk and paint the crimson rose.

What emerges from this humanised conception of nature is a picture of nature the creator, working spontaneously, changing his (or her) movements according to his fancy. In the beginning we see nature sowing seeds haphazardly; spring flowers are 'blawn' (l.1), meaning made to blossom and also blown, at 'her' whim. Shortly after, and most of all, nature is cast as a capricious artist - an automatist like Jackson Pollock - absolutely manipulating his canvas; working his 'freaks at will' (l.11) in drawing the Gowdspink. The bird is solely an expression of nature's 'pencil', 'art', 'skill' (ll.10-12). It is made unadaptable by forces beyond its control. If it 'fool(s)' (l.19) the beauty of the rose, its effective power originates in nature who 'chose' (l.19) the flower's inferior colour. The

Gowdspink, as an animal, is a mere artefact of mother nature.

Lines 21-48 consider him and the question of determinism from an altogether different perspective as the rhetoric of shelter, freedom and civilisation drives the issue home to man: 'the brawest drest' (l.22), 'your cleething gay' (l.27), 'ilka fav'rite houff and bield' (l.36), 'Your free-born bosom' (l.39), effect the transition from gowdspink to man, prefigures earlier in the bird's 'new attire' (l.3).

> 'Mang man, wae's-heart! we aften find
> The brawest drest want peace of mind,
> While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
> Is weil contentit wi' his lot.
> Whan WAND wi' glewy birdlime's set,
> To steal far aff your dautit mate,
> Blyth wad ye change your cleething gay
> In lieu of lav'rock's sober grey.
> In vain thro' woods you sair may ban
> Th' envious treachery of man,
> That, wi' your gowden glister ta'en,
> Still hunts you on the simmer's plain,
> And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's
> O' winter's dreery dreepin' snaws.
> Now steekit frae the gowany field,
> Frae ilka fav'rite houff and bield,
> But mergh, alas! to disengage
> Your bonny bouck frae fettering cage,
> Your free-born bosom beats in vain
> For darling liberty again.
> In WINDOW hung, how aft we see
> Thee keek around at warblers free,
> That carrol saft, and sweetly sing
> Wi' a' the blythness of the spring?
> Like TANTALUS they hing you here
> To spy the glories o' the year;
> And tho' you're at the <u>burnie's</u> brink,
> They douna suffer you to drink.

The point is that man too, 'The brawest drest', can lose his own 'peace of mind' (l.22); other men can torment, hunt and trap him in all seasons as they do a bird of prey. But there are fundamental differences between the two. Man can 'change' his 'cleething gay' (l.27). His trap is not built into his being as it is with the Gowdspink. He is 'free-born' (l.39); the bird of the beginning not so at all. A poignant image encapsulates this idea, the image of 'TANTALUS',

whom the gods condemned to Hades for stealing and eating divine food: a culpable act, symbolic of knowingly forfeiting one's liberty. As we shall see later, 'FORTUNE' (l.73), not nature, as with the bird, subjects man for his own failings. In the rhetoric of that later passage, its 'curse' is 'To wyle us' - not compel us - from 'liberty' (ll.73-4). In light of all this the beginning personifications of both nature and the gowdspink bear a special relation here as symbols of the two sides of man's existence: one as the artist/creator recreating nature in art, like the landscape painter or pastoral poet, and the other as the object of somebody else's, or something else's - a system's or an environment's - creation.

The immediate relevance of this passage becomes clearer as the Gowdspink is identified as the turncoat laird succumbing to compelling economic pressures (ll.49-72).

> Ah, Liberty! thou bonny dame,
> How wildly wanton is thy stream,
> Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,
> An' hail you wi' a gratefu' voice.
> The Gowdspink chatters joyous here,
> And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer:
> The MAVIS frae the new-bloom'd thorn
> Begins his lauds at earest morn:
> And herd lowns louping o'er the grass,
> Needs far less fleetching till his lass,
> Than paughty damsels bred at courts,
> Wha thraw their mou's, and take the dorts:
> But, reft of thee, fient flee we care
> For a' that life ahint can spare.
> The Gowdspink, that sae lang has kend
> Thy happy sweets (his wonted friend),
> Her sad confinement ill can brook
> In some dark chamber's dowy nook:
> Tho' MARY's hand his nebb supplies,
> Unkend to hunger's painfu' cries,
> Ev'n beauty canna cheer the heart
> Frae life, frae liberty apart;
> For now we tyne its wonted lay,
> Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythly gay.

Those first lines of the passage portray the Tory social hierarchy - the state in which 'Liberty' exists, 'the birdies a' rejoice'

(11.49, 51) - and allude to the older Stewart Scotland of Dunbar's "The THISTLE and the ROSE", where 'all the Birds thay sang with Voice on hicht', 'The Mavys', 'The Merle', 'The Lark', 'The common Voice' (XXIV - XXVII), a work which Fergusson knew from Ramsay's Ever Green. At the top of the pecking order is the Gowdspink, who courts his 'peer' (1.54), marries with his social equal and perpetuates his class. Next we have the 'Mavis', representing the industrious gudeman, arising 'at earest morn' from the 'new-bloom'd thorn' (11.55-6), an apt metaphor for new techniques of cultivation which brought attendant problems with them. Lastly, 'herd lowns' and lasses occupy the bottom position (11.57-8). This is the old social structure with its built-in checks and balances, and its compensations for every degree of the hierarchy, as implied earlier in lines 22-4.

> The brawest drest want peace of mind,
> While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
> Is weil contentit wi' his lot.

The Gowdspink wishes to subvert the structure and is thus exhorted to maintain the old state of liberty, '(his wonted friend)' (1.64), which he is renouncing - and the 'paughty damsels bred at courts' (1.59) prepare us for this - for the court and the city, 'some dark chamber's dowy nook' (1.66). These lines are a rehash of some popular Scots humanist philosophical verse of the 17th and early 18th centuries, as for example,

> Each Tree's a Cage and Consort, where we hear
> How Liberty the very Birds does chear ...

> In those sweet Fields, the Happy Shepherds play,
> And, by their Looks, Speak more than we can Say;
> No Thought nor Face needs her a Cheating Dress,
> What True Love Thinks, Kind Nature does Express:
> O! how they Laugh at Favours Bought And Sold,
> And scorn the Triumphs of bewitching Gold: ...
>
> (Mackenzie of Rosehaugh "CAELIA's Country-house and Closet", 11.71-2, 79-84, Watson's Choice Collection, II)

How happy is the Man that labours all the Day For little Pay,
For he at Night may safely go to Rest;
And he that travails up and down, and takes most Pains
Receives the Gains,
And takes his Lodging where it likes him best.
These Men have Liberty to labour,
A sweet and pleasant Thing;
And in their Fare more happy are
Than is a troubled King.
The Country Swains, the silly Shepherds,
And Tradesmen eek also,
Have Liberty, while here I ly
In Sorrow and in Wo.

("King Charles's Lament", ll.85-98,
Watson's Choice Collection, III)

There are no mitigating circumstances for Fergusson's laird; his fortune is self-inflicted.

Thus FORTUNE aft a curse can gie,
To wyle us far frae liberty:
Then tent her syren smiles wha list,
I'll ne'er envy your GIRNAL's grist;
For whan fair freedom smiles nae mair,
Care I for life? Shame fa' the hair;
A FIELD o'ergrown wi' rankest STUBBLE,
The essence of a paltry bubble.

(ll.73-80)

Stated rhetorically in food imagery, actually, in the standard terms the poet uses for the new laird's obsession with delicacies and larger payments in kind (e.g. "A DRINK ECLOGUE", ll.63, 95; "The RISING of the SESSION", ll.17-18), he forsakes the 'happy sweets' (l.64) of liberty for a larger share of his 'GIRNAL's grist' (l.79); as with Tantalus, forbidden fruit. Note how Eden has become a desert; his fields grow over with the 'rankest STUBBLE' (l.79) in his abandonment of freedom. 'Syren smiles' (l.75) are the most telling image of the passage in describing the position of the individual with relation to economic determinism, the point being that the will of man, like that of Odysseus or Orpheus in resisting the syrens, can counter its effect. No doubt the poet has in mind here the many artistic renderings of the syrens as half human and half bird:

like his Gowdspink laird, symbols of man yielding to temptations within himself.

Fergusson's concept of 'FORTUNE' is, in fact, very precise, and in the best humanist tradition. His outlook is in most respects little different from the Middle Scots poet, Robert Henryson. He would have agreed wholeheartedly with Cresseid's revelation in Henryson's The Testament Of Cresseid that she, and not her 'frivol fortun' (l.454), placed herself on the wheel; that she acted the fickle and frivolous part herself.

> 'Thy lufe, thy lawtie and thy gentilnes
> I countit small in my prosperitie,
> Sa elevait I was in wantones
> And clam upon the fickill quheill sa hie.
> All faith and lufe I promissit to the
> Was in the self fickill and frivolous:
> O fals Cresseid and trew knicht Troilus!
>
> (ll.547-553)[1]

Furthermore, and in this lies his opposition to the literati, he totally disagreed with the old Machiavellian belief, to which they as utilitarians adhered, that the end justifies the means, or with Machiavelli's definitions of Virtue and Fortune, where Virtue is 'right knowledge' and Fortune the varying circumstances to which that Virtue, irrespective of the brutal means, must be adapted. Machiavelli says,

> ... fortune varying and men remaining fixed in their ways, they are successful so long as these conform to circumstance, but when they are opposed then they are unsuccessful.[2]

This was anathema to the humanist who accepted both free will and Christian virtue.

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1. The Testament Of Cresseid, Robert Henryson Poems, edit. by Charles Elliot (Oxford 1963).
2. Quoted in J. Bronowski and Bruce Mazlish The Western Intellectual Tradition (New York 1960), 42.

"HAME CONTENT. A SATIRE." directs itself, in its subtitle, "To all whom it may concern."; again, to the laird in social flight. It is another link in the chain of Tory poems on this subject stretching back to William Lithgow's, the seventeenth century Scots poet's "SCOTLANDS Welcome To Her Native Sonne, And Soveraigne Lord, King Charles"; especially the sections entitled, "Superfluous posting to Court" and "The decay of good house keeping";[1] and, later, with the Vernacular Revival, to "The Speech of a Fife Laird, Newly come from the Grave", where the influence is all the more obvious.

> But when the young Laird became vain,
> And went away to France and Spain,
> Rome raking, wandring here and there:
> O! then became our bootless Care:
> Pride puft him up, because he was
> Far travel'd, and return'd an Ass.
> Then must the Laird, the Good-man's Oye,
> Be Knighted streight; and make convoy,
> Coach'd through the Streets with Horses four ...
>
> (ll.125-33), Watson's Choice Collection, I)

Anticipating Fergusson by a few years, Alexander Nicol published "A Poem on R _____ H _____ of South Ballo" (Rural Muse) on the same theme and, in a more nostalgic vein, his "An Elegy on Auld Use and Wont".

> Our peers and gentrie were content
> To bide at hame and spend their rent:
> But now to travel they are bent
> Baith ane and a';
> And cracks their credit ere they stint,
> Sin' Wont's awa.

The absentee lairds of "HAME CONTENT" come from the same stock in their forsaking country for city; the city near, 'Borrowstown' (l.21), and far, 'Montpelier' and the cities of Europe (ll.66-67). Their tenants suffer the lairds' absence, as the 'estate' becomes

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1. The Poetical Remains Of William Lithgow, edit. by James Maidment (Edinburgh 1863). Edition is unlined and pages are unnumbered.

less familiar than foreign countries (ll.73-4), and they withdraw needed financial assistance (ll.7-8), once guaranteed the tenant by custom: just the complaints William Mackintosh admonished the lairds against in his Essay. Consistent with the pattern, the estate passes to 'The second SHARGER' (l.60), a rapacious substitute.[1] Ramsay's prophecy of doom is fulfilled.

> Sum Thanis thair Tennants pykit and squeist,
> And pursit up all thair Rent,
> Syne wallopit to far Courts, and bleist,
> Till Riggs and Schaws war spent;
> Syne byndging and whyndging,
> Quhen thus redusit to Howps,
> They dander and wander
> About pure Lickmadowps.
>
> ("THE VISION", ll.315-22)[2]

This is the central theme of most of the poem.

Technically speaking, we find that familiar interplay of antagonisms, in just over half the poem, of city-country, freedom-determinism, Whig-Tory; but also, in the remaining part, a more elaborate statement of the relationship in the poet's imagination between pastoral composition and the disintegrating countryside. The second part is no accidental digression but a complement to the earlier material on the new laird.

In the first 74 lines are most of the features of the pastoral conflict we have isolated, a noteworthy motif being the idea of the self-imposed constraint of the will and its subjection to determinist forces that otherwise would not have made an impact. The section breaks down into four logically connected parts which delineate the

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1. This is historically accurate. See Smout History of Scottish People, 271; Kames Sketches, II, 484.
2. It is a pity that the ever conciliatory Ramsay did not say this in his own person but used the pseudonym, Ar. Scot. Cf. also his "An Epistle to James Oswald" (ll.31-35).

contrasts of city and country, luxury and frugality, inhibition and freedom. In the first, lines 1-16, is the familiar Whig city of noise, money-grubbing and restraint.

> SOME fock, like BEES, fu glegly rin
> To bykes bang'd fu' o' strife and din,
> And thieve and huddle crumb by crumb,
> Till they have scrapt the dautit PLUMB,
> Then craw fell crously o' their wark,
> Tell o'er their turners MARK by MARK,
> Yet darna think to lowse the pose,
> To aid their neighbours ails and woes.
> Gif GOWD can fetter thus the heart,
> And gar us act sae base a part,
> Shall MAN, a niggard near-gawn elf!
> Rin to the tether's end for pelf;
> Learn ilka cunzied scoundrel's trick,
> Whan a's done sell his saul to NICK:
> I trow they've coft the purchase dear,
> That gang sic lengths for warldly gear.

Lines 17-38 take us from city to country, from crowds and tension to open space and relaxation, from noise to peace, from luxury to content, from the modern to the classical world, from modern Athens to Arcadia.

> Now whan the DOG-DAY heats begin
> To birsel and to peel the skin,
> May I lie streekit at my ease,
> Beneath the caller shady trees,
> (Far frae the din o' Borrowstown,)
> Whar water plays the haughs bedown,
> To jouk the simmer's rigor there,
> And breath a while the caller air
> 'Mang herds, an' honest cottar fock,
> That till the farm and feed the flock;
> Careless o' mair, wha never fash
> To lade their KIST wi' useless CASH,
> But thank the GODS for what they've sent
> O' health eneugh, and blyth content,
> An' PITH, that helps them to stravaig
> Our ilka cleugh and ilka craig,
> Unkend to a' the weary granes
> That aft arise frae gentler banes,
> On easy-chair that pamper'd lie,
> Wi' banefu' viands gustit high,
> And turn and fald their weary clay,
> To rax and gaunt the live-lang day.

With the contrast drawn, the poet changes from a subjective to an objective posture, removing himself from the scene - he was there in line 19 - and citing the 'sages' (l.39) and, more poignantly, that

recurring humanist example of animals. As in the bridal section of "AN ECLOGUE" the humanist poet resorts to animal, and sometimes insect, imagery to relegate the new laird to a lower station on the scale of being, below that of man. Like a wild animal he is either in flight for his life or tightly bridled. The laird is said to 'Rin to the tether's end' (l.21) or to flee like a 'huntit de'il' (l.63) to situations which confine him: to the crowded and competitive towns - 'bykes bang'd fu' o' strife and din'[1] (l.2) - where his heart is 'fetter(ed)' (l.9) and his 'saul' sold (l.14). He is at the emotional and spiritual state of a beast, having neither choice nor control of himself. Like Sandie in "AN ECLOGUE" he is made inferior to his farm animals, and is admonished, 'Come then, shake off thir sluggish ties' (l.45). 'Unyoke' (l.53). The 'unyokit' oxen (l.52) are freer than he who is 'Steekit frae Nature's beauties a'' (l.41).

> Come then, shake off thir sluggish ties,
> And wi' the bird o' dawning rise;
> On ilka bauk the clouds hae spread
> Wi' blobs o' dew a pearly bed;
> Frae falds nae mair the owsen rout,
> But to the fatt'ning clever lout,
> Whare they may feed at heart's content,
> Unyokit frae their winter's stent.
> Unyoke then, man, an' binna sweer
> To ding a hole in ill-haind gear;
> O think that EILD, wi' wyly fitt,
> Is wearing nearer bit by bit;
> Gin yence he claws you wi' his paw,
> What's siller for?
>
> (ll.45-58)

By this criterion the simple cottars are superior to the laird because they enjoy freedom, 'ease' (l.19), the capacity to be 'Careless o' mair' (l.27), and, the chief virtue of the stoic, 'blyth content' (l.30). The animals are superior to him because, though their existence is purely physical, they too are 'content' (l.51) and live in

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1. The bees here are an image of activity without order or purpose.

harmony with nature's seasonal changes, with winter's burdens and spring's ease.

From lines 75 to the end the pastoral tension shifts from the real to an imaginative landscape; from the troubled countryside, the decomposing Tory model, to the distressed pastoral poet whose fanciful Scots literary landscape is jeopardised by foreign attractions and restraints. The sudden leap from the daft laird in 'Italy', 'Montpelier' and at 'TIBUR's waters' (ll.61-74) to the vogue for imitating 'Roman' poetic models, 'the reverence of schools!' (ll.76-7), is logical. Neoclassical imitation, the comparison suggests, is to Scottish poetry what superfluities and social climbing are to Scottish rural life: a constraint. Imitations of the 'schools' are characterised - note the rhetorical contrast with the earlier pastoral scene of 'water' playing 'the haughs bedown' (l.22) - as 'lifeless dowy pools' (ll.78-9), 'kittle strains' (l.85) locked in unnecessary complexity and 'disguise' (l.105). 'Like ours', he says, neoclassical imitation is not free and expressive; it

> ... canna warm the heart
> Wi' simple, saft, bewitching art. (ll.87-8)

Scots poetry appears - consistent with the rhetoric of shelter and civilisation - like the 'honest cottar fock' (l.25) of before, in

> The simple garb o' NATURE here;
> Mair comely far, an' fair to sight
> Whan in her easy cleething dight,
> Than in disguise ye was before
> On Tibur's, or on Arno's shore.
>
> (ll.102-06)

As with the pastorals which make progress part of the Tory ideal to demonstrate its timeless application, Fergusson's ideal poetic landscape is both traditional and modern: primitivist, in so far as it is natural and fanciful; historicist, recalling Herd's prefatory

defence of Ancient And Modern Scottish Songs on Scotland as the natural landscape for poetry; and very traditional, with the several allusions to Scots songs like "Leader Haughs And Yarrow", "Tweed-Side", "The Banks of Tweed", and "The Broom of Cowdenknows".[1]

> On Leader haughs an' Yarrow braes,
> ARCADIAN herds wad tyne their lays,
> To hear the mair melodious sounds
> That live on our POETIC grounds.
> Come, FANCY, come, and let us tread
> The simmer's flow'ry velvet bed,
> And a' your SPRINGS delightfu' lowse
> On TWEEDA's banks or COWDENKNOWS ...
>
> (11.89-96)

What he appeals for is,

> That, ta'en wi' thy inchanting sang,
> Our Scottish lads may round ye thrang,
> Sae pleas'd, they'll never fash again
> To court you on Italian plain ...
>
> (11.97-100)

The thematic ligature between the sections is that the recent imitations by Scottish poets[2] threaten to ravage the cultural or imaginative landscape as much as does the laird's newfound Whig values. The poem ends, appropriately, with a lament for that noted Tory, Jacobite and Scottish humanist songwriter and poet, Hamilton of Bangour, and for the culture he belonged to. With Bangour's death the muses have fled Scotland.

> O BANGOUR! now the hills and dales
> Nae mair gi'e-back thy tender tales!
> The birks on Yarrow now deplore
> Thy mournfu' muse has left the shore:
> Near what bright burn or chrystal spring
> Did you your winsome whistle hing?
> The muse shall there, wi' WAT'RY eie,
> Gi'e the dunk swaird a tear for thee;
> And Yarrow's genius, dowy dame!

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1. McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, "NOTES 89, 96", 292.

2. Captain Edward Topham comments on this in his Letters from Edinburgh 1774-1775 (facsimile repr. Edinburgh 1971 of London 1776) 374-75, 377.

Shall there forget her blude-stain'd stream,
On thy sad grave to seek repose,
Wha morn'd her fate, condol'd her woes.

(11.107-118)

Again Fergusson's personal message in this is that the forces which eradicate the happy, Tory system of the country are the very same that prevent his remaining a pastoral poet.

Only two weeks earlier "On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET" was published: a full fledged satire on the laird; in the main, devoid of pastoral contrasts. With the destruction at hand the humanist chooses his customary weapon, satire.

The idea of the poem is in no way original, owing a good deal to Claudero's "On seeing a Scots Fidler in laced Cloths" and to Hamilton of Bangour's "MISS AND THE BUTTERFLY, A FABLE", where the butterfly stands for

Forsaking then the simple plain,
To mingle with the courtly train ... (p.51)[1]

and pursuing 'glitt'ring gewgaw' (p.51) illusions. Nonetheless it is a work of more gravity than these, and approaches, at times, the moral quality of "THE Cherry and the Slae", which Fergusson knew from Watson's Choice Collection, I. His lines 19-68 clearly echo Montgomery's passage on the 'Butterflee'.

I sprang up with Cupido's Wings,
Whose shots and Shooting-gear resigns
to lend me for a Day.
As Icarus with borrow'd Flight,
I mounted higher than I might,
o'er perillous a Play:
First Forth I draw the double Dart,
which sometimes shot his Mother,
Wherewith I hurt my wanton Heart,
in hope to hurt another;

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1. The Poems And Songs Of William Hamilton Of Bangour, edit. by James Paterson (Edinburgh 1850).

It hurt me, or burnt me,
  while wither end I handle:
Come see now, in me now,
  the Butterflee and Candle.

(11.155-68)

Too late I knew, who hews too hie,
The Spail shall Fall into his Eye,
     too late I went to Shools,
Too late I heard the Swallow Preach,
Too late Experience doth teach
     the School-Master of Fools.
Too late I find the Nest I seek,
     when all the Birds are flown:
Too late the Stable Door I seek,
     when as the Steed is stown;
       Too late ay, their state ay,
         as foolish Folk espy,
       Behind so, they find so,
         remeed, and so do I.

(11.183-96)

As one would expect, Fergusson's rhetoric also owes something to Pope's moral pieces as, for example, "To Mr. John Moore ..."

Man is a very Worm by Birth,
Vile Reptile, weak, and vain! (11.5-6)

The Fops are painted Butterflies,
     That flutter for a Day;
First from a Worm they take their Rise,
     And in a Worm Decay ...

(11.17-20)[1]

In humanist rhetorical terms, Fergusson's butterfly, a mere insect, is an object of contempt; as a laird turned fop, he is an opponent of civil society, for clothes, like shelter, in helping man to adapt to nature, are marks of civilisation, the functionally and traditionally appropriate ones being the most suitable and the most natural.

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1. Cf. also Pope "E. of Dorset - II. PHRYNE", 11.19-24. Incidentally, Fergusson uses all three of Pope's terms: 'worms' (1.6), 'Worm' (1.18), 'reptiles' (1.16), and, of course, 'butterfly', throughout.

As a creation of the new society, then, butterfly stands for the artificial, the unnatural. This last point warrants notice, as the thematic matter is throughout skilfully interwoven into the tension of Art versus Nature, which of itself, Raymond Williams correctly observes, implies 'values by which the coming industrial civilisation was to be condemned'.[1] Doubtless, Fergusson would have substituted abomination for civilisation here. As with all the rural poems, civilisation is the matter at hand, and by it he means: building upon nature; conforming with the seasons in adapting one's shelter, livelihood or dress to her; harnessing and, in so far as one can, controlling the natural landscape; elevating oneself far above insect or beast for the day of the last judgement.

The opening lines, 1-18, centre on Art - or artifice - as an insubstantial basis for civilisation.

> DAFT Gowk, in MACARONI dress,
> Are ye come here to shew your face,
> Bowden wi' pride o' simmer gloss,
> To cast a dash at REIKIE'S cross;
> And glowr at mony twa-legg'd creature,
> Flees braw by art, tho' worms by nature?
> Like country LAIRD in city cleeding,
> Ye're come to town to lear' good breeding;
> To bring ilk darling toast and fashion,
> In vogue amang the flee creation,
> That they, like buskit BELLES and BEAUS,
> May crook their mou' fu' sour at those
> Whase weird is still to creep, alas!
> Unnotic'd 'mang the humble grass;
> While you, wi' wings new buskit trim,
> Can far frae yird and reptiles skim;
> Newfangle grown wi' new got form,
> You soar aboon your mither WORM.

The abundance of temporal adjectives suggests the transience of Art and of the butterfly society. 'Simmer gloss' (1.3) is the seasonal metaphor for the pride of butterflies, able to shine only in fair

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1. Culture and Society 1780-1950, 54.

weather, and the temporal words, 'fashion' (l.9), 'vogue' (l.10), 'new' (ll.15, 17), qualifying 'creation' (l.10) and 'form' (l.17), reaffirm the idea of impermanence in Art, in the newly contrived society of the town, society of the misplaced 'country LAIRD' just 'come to town' (ll.7-8). The 'new' wings (l.15) carrying the fledgling town dwellers over their rural brothers and relations (ll.14, 18) are an emblem of social divisions without natural substance, contrived and unenduring, like those of Icarus. This social division, from what was once a close-knit society, defies nature in its transience, for nature embraces all seasons and constantly renews itself, but also in its self-deception, as butterflies are 'Flees braw by art, tho' worms by nature' (l.6).

Lines 19-58 move gradually from a general philosophical statement to the local scene as interpreted from the poet's observation post on the streets of Edinburgh. Once again, civilisation is assumed to reside in man's adaptability to nature, especially in his ability to weather adversity and to strive after permanence. Butterfly's problem is his own temporality, his fair weather disposition which leaves him a victim of, rather than, what he should be, a victor over, ill fortune. 'NATURE', of which art is an inferior part, the poet reflects, lent butterflies their wings 'for a day' (ll.19-20), as a momentary relief from the truth of their evanescence, 'Of hourly dwining into nought' (l.24). But it will not screen them indefinitely from their inherent weakness.

> But whan she girns an' glowrs sae dowr
> Frae BOREAN HOUFF in angry show'r,
> Like thee they scoug frae street or field,
> An' hap them in a lyther bield;
> For they war' never made to dree
> The adverse gloom o' FORTUNE'S eie ...
>
> (ll.31-36)

The accents hovering over 'made', 'dree' (l.35), the long a and e, subtly underline the Art-Nature confrontation. The butterflies were not directly 'made' by nature, but made by their own devices; nor did nature, from whom they owed their original identity, intend them to suffer. The 'adverse gloom' (l.36) which they fall victim to derives not from nature but from 'FORTUNE's eie' (l.36), from human eyes belonging to the distinct social setting to which they have now removed themselves. Because they are unnatural, because they are uncivilised - unadapted to their environment - they are responsible for their own undoing.

With gentle mockery the metaphor of the butterfly is unveiled for what it is. Butterfly is the laird, exhorted to return to his 'green KAIL-YEARD' (l.40). He has exchanged the natural 'fruits', 'flow'rs' (ll.40, 46) and 'music' of the birds (ll.41, 43) for worthless ephemera of the town: street calls of ' "penny pies all-piping hot" ' that will soon be cooly consumed, momentary 'gruntles' of the City Guard, 'flow'rs' that pass, like the human excreta they are, 'at ten hours bell' every evening (ll.41-6). Now the tone changes to pity as the theme of an unsubstantial civilisation is expanded, and its relation to the laird turned city brought to bear.

> Now shou'd our sclates wi' hailstanes ring,
> What cabbage fald wad screen your wing?
> Say, fluttering fairy! wer't thy hap
> To light beneath braw Nany's cap,
> Wad she, proud butterfly of May!
> In pity lat you skaithless stay;
> The fury's glancing frae her ein
> Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen,
> That, wae for thee! far, far outvy
> Her PARIS ARTIST's finest dye;
> Then a' your bonny spraings wad fall,
> An' you a WORM be left to crawl.
>
> (ll.47-58)

The laird, a seasonal 'butterfly of May' (l.51), must perforce lose

his wings. In adversity he, like an aimless insect, is without shelter or an accepting society. In the hailstorm he cannot return to his abandoned tenants at the cabbage fald (l.48). He has no recourse to the nouveaux riches of the city; socially they compete, holding 'FORTUNE's' gloomy 'eie' over him (l.36), and Nany's glancing 'fury's' (l.53).

Quite simply political aspirations in the city, the unnatural exchange of the rural life for that of the town lawyer, have ruined the laird.

> To sic mishanter rins the laird
> Wha quats his ha'-house an' kail-yard,
> Grows politician, scours to court,
> Whare he's the laughing-stock and sport
> of MINISTERS, wha jeer an' jibe,
> And heeze his hopes wi' thought o' bribe,
> Till in the end they flae him bare,
> Leave him to poortith, and to care.
> Their fleetching words o'er late he sees,
> He trudges hame, repines and dies.
>
> (ll.59-68)

A rural proverb, in keeping with the Tory idea of to each his allotted role, condemns his part.

> And may they scad their lips fu' leal,
> That dip their spoons in ither's kail.
>
> (ll.71-2)

Two additional matters merit our attention. Self-disintegration, a subject of grave concern to early psychologists like Smith and Kames, constitutes another facet of social division. It is related to the notion of deception through Art. Through Art, 'dress' and 'gloss' (ll.1, 3), in the case of the laird, 'city cleeding' (l.7), he fails

to recognise his original nature as a worm (l.6).[1] He progresses from 'sel'beguile(ment)' (l.22) back to his former self, though now a downfallen worm he is merely 'left to crawl' (l.58), isolated from those whom he rejected. Secondly, as in "AN ECLOGUE", social change is seen against an undercurrent of determinism. 'Flees' (ll.6, 10), a telling image, itself evokes its verbal form, to flee. Moreover, fair weather butterflies flee ('scoug') 'frae street or field' in the storm (l.33); 'FORTUNE's eie' (l.36) and 'fury's glancing frae her (Nany's) ein' (l.53) pursue them. Nevertheless, to ask what determines the lairds 'rin' to 'mishanter', where he becomes the 'sport of MINISTERS' (ll.59, 62-3), is to beg the question.

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1. In Christian humanist terms - and this is a serious flaw of character - the laird lacks 'prudentia'. According to Cicero who was, Martin Battestin reminds us, chiefly responsible for its definition in the eighteenth century, this is practical knowledge, 'the ability to distinguish between good and evil ... intelligence enabling us to discern the truth of circumstances as they really are ... that perspicacity of moral vision which alone permits us to perceive the truth behind appearances and to proceed from the known to the obscure .... The Providence of Wit, 167-8. See also 129, 171, 204, 207. Fergusson often satirises this moral failing, as, for example, in "LEITH RACES" (ll.136-44).

CHAPTER 5

THE SUBSTITUTE LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

The question of the natural or real as against the artificial was topical in other related senses, and no less so in the mid-century theories of personality which arose out of the sweeping change from agrarian to urban, commercial living. From the time of Francis Hutcheson it was thought possible to compartmentalise all human drives into socially acceptable substitutes.[1] In this manner the highly civilised could maintain the dynamism of the savage without any attendant drawbacks. For example, Hutcheson remarks that 'Civil Societys substitute Actions in Law, instead of the Force allow'd in the State of Nature'. Similarly, Kames maintains that law suits replace war between states while, at the same time, preventing softness of manners.[2] Equally, there was the attempt to justify the age of commerce. Man's desires for action and pleasure, according to Hume, could find noble expression in commercial pursuits; the primeval desire for the hunt might be fulfilled in economic ventures, and the impulse to act given a constructive out in business dealings.[3]

Champions of the substitution theory there were in plenty and, it must be added, opponents as well. Adam Ferguson disagreed that speculation could replace action. Modern society, to his mind, was notoriously threatened by passivity and useless knowledge.[4] In fact, Hume's idea that pleasure was to be found in the pursuit 'even of the

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1. See Hutcheson on 'simpler gratification of appetite' and 'pleasures of the imagination'. Moral Philosophy, I, 109, 113.
2. Hutcheson Of Beauty and Virtue, 281; Kames Sketches, I, 435.
3. See especially Rotwein Hume Economics, xI-xIii, xIvi, xcvii.
4. Civil Society, 179, 206, 217. Cf. David Kettler The Social And Political Thought Of Adam Fergusson (Columbus, Ohio 1965) 146.

most worthless prey'[1] was repellent to most of the Scottish intelligentsia.

The substitute life was one of the poet's chief indictments against contemporary society. With his namesake, the philosopher Ferguson, he looked upon the modern commercial state as 'a second-rate sort of society full of second-rate citizens pursuing comparatively worthless objects'.[2] This is apparent in the satires which bridge the gap between country and city verse, especially the companion poems, "The RISING of the SESSION" and "The SITTING of the SESSION", on the new laird as town lawyer. Here again are a couple of anti-Whig poems in the tradition of Arbuthnot, whose John Bull satirises the 'Age of the Lawyers' (61), or Butler.

> While Lawyers have more sober sense;
> Then to argue at their own expence.
> But make their best advantages,
> Of other quarrels, like the Swiss,
> And out of Foraign controversies,
> By aiding both sides, fill their Purses.
> But have no int'rest in the Cause,
> For which, th' ingage, and wage the Laws:
> Nor further Prospect then their Pay,
> Whether they loose or win the Day.
>
> (HUDIBRAS. Third Part, "Canto III", 220-221)

Law, in this sense, is a depraved substitute for what the humanist means by Law: the divine law and order of God, the law of natural harmony, the traditional and divinely sanctioned law of the Stewart King.[3]

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1. Hume "The Stoic", Essays, 144. See particularly the difference of opinion on gaming. Hume A Treatise Of Human Nature, The Philosocal Works Of David Hume (4 vols, Edinburgh 1825) II, 212-13; Kames Sketches, I, 279; Hutcheson Moral Philosophy, II, 75; Beattie Elements Of Moral Sciences, (2 vols, Edinburgh 1790) I, 352-53.
2. The quote is from Duncan Forbes' illuminating introduction to Ferguson Civil Society, xiii.
3. See for example Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Works, II. 52, 468; Cicero De Officiis, 103.

In the two works, Fergusson belabours the substitutionist idea through a carefully contrived play of language and imagery. With "The RISING of the SESSION" the poet shows himself a master of linguistic subtlety. He conveys the frivolity of the substitute life in the town through a preponderance of mock serious legal, business, and pulpit rhetoric while, with rural proverbs and imagery, reminding us of the town dweller's distance from the natural rural setting from which he has egregiously absented himself.

The proclamatory style of the opening lines, intentionally inappropriate to the matter at hand, ridicules through pomposity and overstatement the inflated self-importance of the lawyers.

> TO a' men living be it kend,
> The SESSION now is at an end:
> Writers, your finger-nebbs unbend,
> And quatt the pen,
> Till Time wi' lyart pow shall send
> Blythe June again.
>
> (ll.1-6)

That first phrase, 'TO a' men living' (l.1), carries with it more than its apparent declamatory purpose, pawkily implying that few have survived the rigours, or the sheer boredom, of the legal profession. It is neatly balanced by the subject of hypocritical language and boredom - 'Tir'd o' the law, and a' its phrases' (l.7) - in the first line of the following stanza, which develops the lawyers' empty existence into a contrast we have seen several times before: between farm animals and the quondam laird. The lawyers' 'country cheer' (l.10) is a brief seasonal relief but his pony 'Thrives a' the year' (l.12).

> Tir'd o' the law, and a' its phrases,
> The wylie writers, rich as Croesus,
> Hurl frae the town in hackney chaises,
> For country cheer:
> The powny that in spring-time grazes,
> Thrives a' the year.
>
> (ll.7-12)

Those sibilant end stopped lines - 'phrases - Croesus - chaises - grazes' (11.7, 8, 9, 11) - set into relief the impetuous hurling of the hackney carriages and conjure up that picture of the hunted or pursued laird who 'scarce tholes TIME to cool his wheel' ("HAME CONTENT", 1.64). Moreover, man runs; his animals graze freely, 'Unyokit frae their winter's stent' ("HAME CONTENT", 1.52). The pony, acting out his rightful part, is superior to the laird out of place, to what James VI had described as the fish out of water. With lines 13-18 the irony of the opening returns.

> Ye lawyers, bid fareweel to lies,
> Fareweel to din, fareweel to fees,
> The canny hours o' rest may please
> Instead o' siller:
> Hain'd multer hads the mill at ease,
> And finds the miller.
>
> (11.13-18)

The prolonged e and s rhymes, reminding us of glibness and a criesh my loof approach to life - 'lies - fees - please - ease', undercut the 'farewell' (1.14) to the money-grubbing town, as does the actual fact of the lawyers - the absentee lairds - demanding their 'multer' (1.17), that unjust fee paid to the master of the mill. Even briefly, they cannot forget their town values. Money interferes with their ability to return to the country and to nature. This is stated more poetically in the last lines of the section. Here the natural metaphor, and this is a technique Fergusson uses skilfully and often, is used for ironic effect; in fact, to distance the lawyers from the natural world. They are depicted as blyth sons of the sun's surrogate in the town, that dangerous and unpredictable controller of men: fortune.

> Blyth they may be wha wanton play
> In fortune's bonny blinkin ray ...
>
> (11.19-20)

Lines 25-48 set off the opening and closing sections with bleak reflections on the poverty and deprivation of the farmers, sadly neglected by the laird. Neglect and scorn are implicit in the rhetorical question,

> What writer wadna gang as far as
> He cou'd for bread. (11.35-36)

> Ohon the day for him that's laid,
> In dowie poortith's caldrife shade,
> Ablins owr honest for his trade,
> He racks his wits,
> How he may get his buick weel clad,
> And fill his guts.

> The farmers sons, as yap as sparrows,
> Are glad, I trow, to flee the barras,
> And whistle to the plough and harrows
> At barley seed:
> What writer wadna gang as far as
> He cou'd for bread.

> After their yokin, I wat weel
> They'll stoo the kebbuck to the heel;
> Eith can the plough-stilts gar a chiel
> Be unco vogie,
> Clean to lick aff his crowdy-meal,
> And scart his cogie.

> Now mony a fallow's dung adrift
> To a' the blasts beneath the lift,
> And tho' their stamack's aft in tift
> In vacance time,
> Yet seenil do they ken the rift
> O' stappit weym.

These lines introduce a clash between the artificial and the real, between the superficial glitter of the town and the harsh realities of the country. The boredom, lies, money and lavish plenty of before are placed vis-à-vis the farmer's pitched battle with naked poverty, hunger, and the bare elements - 'a' the blasts beneath the lift' (1.44). Though these adversaries, like money among the lawyers, erode freedom, the farmer's life is stoically ideal: a picture of hard primitivism, 'honest' (1.27), merry in labour (11.33-4), and wholesome, 'unco vogie' at his 'crowdy-meal' (11.40-1).

With lines 49-72 the poet shifts the scene back to the town as we discover a broader scheme of his linguistic assault.

> Now gin a Notar shou'd be wanted,
> You'll find the pillars gayly planted;
> For little thing protests are granted
> Upo' a bill,
> And weightiest matters covenanted
> For haf a gill.
>
> Nae body takes a morning dribb
> O' Holland gin frae Robin Gibb;
> And tho' a dram to Rob's mair sib
> Than is his wife,
> He maun take time to daut his Rib
> Till siller's rife.
>
> This vacance is a heavy doom
> On Indian Peter's coffee-room,
> For a' his china pigs are toom;
> Nor do we see
> In wine the sucker biskets soom
> As light's a flee.
>
> But stop, my Muse, nor make a main;
> Pate disna fend on that alane;
> He can fell twa dogs wi' ae bane,
> While ither fock
> Maun rest themselves content wi' ane.
> Nor farer trock.

The previous sections expounded the humanist idea of the Whig man of law and business as a frivolous mercenary; on the scale of being, something beneath a domestic animal; in the common rhetoric of Tory and Episcopalian, a beast. The rhetoric of this section particularises the problem even further, all but naming the culprits, the champions of law and business, Whig and Presbyterian. The important linguistic techniques of the earlier sections are indeed to be found here, especially the predominance of rural metaphors which, in their application to town objects, pokes fun at the townsman who has travelled so far from the natural setting to which he belongs; for example, notar's pillars 'gayly planted' (l.50); Indian Peter's 'china pigs' (l.63); the simile comparing sugar biscuits to the lightness of a

'flee' (l.66); the rural proverb on felling 'twa dogs' (l.69); even the use of the carefully chosen word 'fock' (l.70). What is different is the intrusion of the bombast of a Presbyterian divine for ironic effect - 'protests are granted' (l.51), 'weightiest matters covenanted' (l.53), 'vacance is a heavy doom' (l.61) - and, more generally, the mock serious tone, reminiscent of so many Scots Episcopal and Catholic satires where the devotion of the Calvinist is transferred from spiritual to worldly affairs. The formidable 'Pate', who can 'fell twa dogs' (ll.68-9), is, for example, yet another version of the kirk knight à la Butler or Meston. We can be even more specific about the tradition in which Fergusson writes. The influence of Claudero's "A Farewell to the General Assembly", a biting satire on the kirk, is manifest in the precise rhythms of the opening, and the overall tension of form and content.

> Ye fleshers, sheathe your reeking knives;
> Of GOD's creation spare the lives;
> Relent the slaughter you have made,
> And mourn a moment o'er the dead!
> Great bulls did roar, with dying groans,
> And slaughter'd were for our Mass Johns;
> The smaller cattle, calves and lambs,
> Were snatched from their mournful dams;
> At the Assembly lost their lives,
> To stuff the clergy and their wives ...
>
> (pp.12-13)

We will have a good deal to say later about Fergusson's treatment of the Habbie stanza and its handling for a century before him as an implied criticism of Presbyterian cant and enthusiasm.

The final lines, 73-84, address the change-house keepers in the same affected tone. With mordant irony the decreasing drink sales are made a test of faith in adversity, again a jibe at the Presbyterian businessman, while the customers' return is made a life and death matter.

Ye change-house keepers never grumble,
Tho' you a while your bickers whumble,
Be unco patientfu' and humble,
Nor make a din,
Tho' gude joot binna kend to rumble
Your weym within.

You needna grudge to draw your breath
For little mair than haf a reath,
Than, gin we a' be spar'd frae death,
We'll gladly prie
Fresh noggans o' your reaming graith
Wi' blythsome glee.

Of course, the last two sections stand in opposition to the serious one on the poverty and hunger of the farmers; hence the striking disparity between the 'vacance time' (l.46) on the farm and the 'vacance' - set off in italics - of Indian Peter (l.61); between the trials of the farmer, to 'get his buick weel clad,/And fill his guts' (ll.29-30), and those of the change-house keepers to get 'joot' for their hungry 'weym(s)' (ll.77-8). In this sense the farmer's life is at least real; the townsman's wholly artificial.

With the later companion poem, "The SITTING of the SESSION", we move closer to the substitute life in the city itself, where business and legal abuse hold sway over the ejected rural population of the town. It is another anti-Whig poem after the manner of Arbuthnot's History of John Bull (especially pp.11-12, 20, 38, 64-5, 186) or Swift's "The ANSWER, by Dr. SWIFT" (ll.59-146). The poem begins, significantly, with a powerful image of winter usurping control: denuding the landscape of her 'simmer's claes' (l.4) and forcing the lawyers with heavy hearts back to the city. It is that recurring metaphor of Whig hegemony and the destruction of civilisation; nature is naked and man, equally unprotected, is forced to flee.

PHOEBUS, sair cow'd wi' simmer's hight,
Cours near the YIRD wi' blinking light;
Cauld shaw the haughs, nae mair bedight

Wi' simmer's claes,
They heeze the heart o' dowy wight
That thro' them gaes.

(11.1-6)

What immediately follows resembles, technically, "The RISING of the SESSION" as rural imagery continuously runs through the monologue and aggravates the speciously cheerful tableau of business and law in the town. These are but pernicious substitutes sundering farm folk from their civilised roots. The rural metaphor is a reminder of the community's distance from its wonted endeavours and from its proper place in the country. Thus 'BUSINESS' (1.7) is mockingly compared to dairy farming, 'frae the gude brown cow' (1.11), and 'The COURT o' SESSION' (1.13) to conviviality and free travel on the open road - of moneymaking.

Weel lo'es me o' you, BUSINESS, now;
For ye'll weet mony a drouthy mou',
That's lang a eisning gane for you,
Withouten fill
O' dribbles frae the gude brown cow,
Or Highland gill.

The COURT O' SESSION, weel wat I,
Pitts ilk chiel's whittle i' the pye,
Can criesh the slaw-gaun wheels whan dry,
Till Session's done,
Tho' they'll gi'e mony a cheep and cry
Or twalt o' June.

(11.7-18)

Lines 19-48 shatter the pastoral illusion in the fashion we should now recognise as typical of Fergusson's country verse. Sharp end stopped lines underline the hard cash foundation of sharing the businessman's pie.

Ye benders a', that dwall in joot,
You'll tak your liquor clean cap out,
Synd your mouse-wabbs wi' reaming stout,
While ye ha'e cash,
And gar your cares a' take the rout,
An' thumb ne'er fash.

(11.19-24)

With the description of Rob Gibb the rural metaphor totally loses its idyllic, if ironical, suggestiveness, and gives way to utter ridicule. Rab's wig becomes an entire landscape replacing the age-old spectacle of white covered hills on a frosty morning in the country while long heavy accents and a tight alliteration pattern in the mention of Rob's fondness for money, evoke the feeling of plodding through deep snow.

> ROB GIBB's grey gizz, new frizzl'd fine,
> Will white as ony snaw-ba' shine;
> Weel does he lo'e the LAWEN coin
> Whan dossied down,
> For whisky gills or dribbs of wine
> In cauld forenoon.
>
> (11.25-30)

Completing the earlier metaphor of the open road and the snowbound path, the next stanza neatly makes the point that freedom and due course of the law are solely dependent upon money: 'Nane wins toll-free' (1.34). Moreover, whip crack end stop lines, reminiscent of the lines on the benders before, bolster the final assertion of the section that money has replaced human loyalties.

> Gin ony here wi' CANKER knocks,
> And has na lous'd his siller pocks,
> Ye need na think to fleetch or cox;
> "Come shaw's your gear;
> "Ae <u>scabbit</u> <u>yew</u> spills twenty FLOCKS,
> "Ye's no be here."
>
> (11.37-42)

Not only do these neophyte lawyers speak a rustic Scots, as opposed to the urbane, Anglicised speech one would expect of them, after the ever popular elocution classes of Sheridan, but they express a twisted form of proverbial country wisdom. 'Ae <u>scabbit</u> <u>yew</u> spills twenty FLOCKS' (1.41) - and this links up with the introductory images of unprotectedness - was once meant for the protection of the community, either, in earliest times, as a caveat against disease among the herd,

or, later, in a figurative sense, as a social caution. In the mouths of the new Edinburgh lawyers, it inverts all priorities of the group for the individual. It is a misguided country voice underlying a forsaken identity and now fragmented rural society divided against itself. 'Gear' (1.40) substitutes for worth in determining who survives. Continuing the theme of deceptive language, lines 43-8 highlight the disjunction of the former rural community through other verbal barriers to communication: the different registers of language the lawyers use to hoodwink their unsophisticated clients.

> Now at the door they'll raise a plea;
> Crack on, my lads! - for flyting's free;
> For gin ye shou'd tongue-tacket be,
> The mair's the pity,
> Whan scalding but and ben we see
> PENDENTE LITE.

Flyting as the only open channel of communication may be free, but, with the lawyers talking over the heads of their clients in Latin legal jargon, its value is nil. Flyting is not so much free as useless. Furthermore there is an important climax to the pastoral shelter imagery in these lines. That final 'scalding but and ben' (1.47) is pregnant with implications. Here we have the Outer and Inner Houses of court as the traditional two room country cottage, really from whence it has drawn the farmers - according to the Tory model - from their former peace at home. Shelter, as we have stated, is the predominate Fergussonian image for civilisation. Law, then, as a disrupted country cottage, full of verbal chaos, imports civilisation at a very low ebb. It is an unsatisfactory replacement if the community is to prosper.

Lines 49-66 provide a last glimpse of the burdensome existence of the urbanite and that of the blinkered farmer striving to join ranks with him. The rhythmic pattern ('LAWYER's skelfs, PRINTER's

presses, unco sair, weighty cases, pleasure places', ll.49-51) and the accents on 'presses', 'weighty cases' (ll.49-50), convey oppressiveness, which is hardly relieved by the attempt of the clark to 'thrive bedeen' (l.52), an expression uniting the mutually exclusive and the impossible.

> The LAWYER's skelfs, and PRINTER's presses,
> Grain unco sair wi' weighty cases;
> The clark in toil his pleasure places,
> To thrive bedeen;
> At five-hour's bell scribes shaw their faces,
> And rake their ein.
>
> (ll.49-54)

Following the rural metaphor, the urbanites are like grain slowly ground up by the legal machine. And in the penultimate stanza the farmers equally are portrayed, like Sandie in "AN ECLOGUE", as mindlessly subservient to it, as they plunge headlong into the legal whirlpool, into the hands of the lawyers, into a wasted life of unneccessary litigation.

> The country fock to lawyers crook,
> "Ah! Weels me on your bonny buik!
> "The benmost part o' my kist nook
> "I'll ripe for thee,
> "And willing ware my hindmost rook
> "For my decree."
>
> (ll.55-60)

In the final lines the rural metaphor changes, dispelling quite effectively the idea of positive substitutes. Far from doling out equal shares of the 'pye' (l.14),

> ... LAW's a DRAW-WELL unco deep,
> Without RIM fock out to keep:
> A donnart chiel, whan drunk, may dreep
> Fu' sleely in,
> But finds the gate baith stay and steep,
> 'Ere out he win.
>
> (ll.61-66)

CHAPTER 6

THE NEW BABYLON - CITY OF CHAOS

The Scots humanist dream of civilisation was essentially, as it had been for Horace, a self-sufficient and well regulated rural society. As we have observed, at the same time as the poet was regretting the disintegration of the country, he was equally deploring the rise of the town as the new centre of a commercial Whig society. In this last particular he was very much another one of the great anti-Presbyterian satirists, albeit fighting a very rearguard battle which had begun in the seventeenth century. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his use of rhetorical devices which had been familiar to the reading public since the days of Cavalier and Roundhead, and which make his city more of a literary place than a real one. The Whig/Presbyterian town was, in humanist rhetorical terms, a body devoid of order; it was the new 'Babylon': 'Babel', 'Babylon of Confusions', 'Whore of Babylon/With many Heads', 'Mungrels of the Whore of Babel', and the like.[1] Archibald Pitcairne, Thomas Ruddiman's boon companion and fellow humanist, simply named his satire on the General Assembly, BABELL. Babylon was a telling image for the abuse of language, the unintelligible gabble of the crowds, and barriers to communication in the new town. It was the Presbyterian 'Cant and Droning' which was to have supplanted the 'Place of Sense and Reason' (Swift's Mechanical Operation Of the SPIRIT)[2], now placed on a large secular scale. The relation between Kirk and city satire is obvious in moving from Pitcairne's assembly of Presbyterians to Colvil's screeching and buzzing city of the Whigs.

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1. See for example Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Essays, Works, I, 42; Colvil Mock Poem, pp.76, 89; Swift "VERSES ON THE DEATH of Dr. Swift, D.S.P.D.", ll.378-84, I; "To Mr. CONGREVE", ll.121-22, II; Tale of a Tub, edit. by A.C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith (2nd edit., Oxford 1958) 194. All quotations from Tale of a Tub follow this edition.

2. In Tale of a Tub, 278.

'And these are all the fruits we see
'Of a Presbyterian paritie;
'To make confusion and a noyse
'And each to drown another's voice,
'All speak at once what they would say, -
'Where all command non can obey.

(BABELL, ll.1225-1230)

Sturs in Streets by Grooms and Pages,
Mountebanks playing on Stages.
Wild-Boars struting out their Bistles,
Black-Birds striving who best Whistles,
Throats of Larks Trumpeting Day,
Falcons beating down their Prey;
Hare and Deer crossing Bogs,
Followed at the Heels by Dogs,
Asses braying, Lyons roaring,
Owls screeching, Eagles soaring,
Foxes roused from their Den,
Monkies imitating Men.

Wars, Rebels, Horse-Races
Proclaim'd at several Market-places:
Capers bringing in their Prizes,
Commons cursing new Excises.
Young Wives old Husbands Horning,
Judges drunk every Morning ...

Courtiers their aims (sic) missing,
Chaplains Widow-Ladies kissing.

Lawyers Counsels at such Rates,
That they cost Men their whole Estates ...

Physicians cheating young and old,
Making both buy Death with Gold ...

Factions in Families and Towns,
Ground manur'd by country Clowns ...

(MOCK POEM, pp.22-23)[1]

The town is populated by animals according to the humanist principle

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1. See also BABELL, ll.79-100, 747-73, 872-79; Meston The Knight, p.14; Hudibras, "The First Part, I", pp.8-9, "The Third Part, III", pp.190-91; Swift "ODE to the KING", ll.72-91, Poems, I; Tale of a Tub, 194-95.

that reason and speech elevate man above the beast.[1] Where they are deficient men are animals, communication is impossible as are subordination and the necessary social hierarchy. Integral to the new Babylon are beasts and insects, symbols of an uncommunicative, irrational and fallen man. Such rhetoric enables the humanist poet to characterise the Whig as a creature of the unthinking, chaotic mob, as in Dryden's Religio Laici.

> This was the fruit the private spirit brought,
> Occasion'd by great zeal and little thought.
> While crowds unlearn'd, with rude devotion warn,
> About the sacred viands buzz and swarm,
> The fly-blown text creates a crawling brood;
> And turns to maggots what was meant for food.
>
> (11.415-20)[2]

'Lice', 'Vermin', 'Maggots', 'Swarm' are substantives used to deflate the Scots Presbyterian in seventeenth and eighteenth century literature.[3] Closely akin to them are words which relate the Whig's living conditions, and his society, to 'Dirt', 'Filth', 'Stagnancy' and the like.[4] Babylon, in seventeenth century terms, was not so much a specific place as a condition of Presbyterian life, pictured most often at Kirk assemblies or on the streets of the town. With Fergusson this changes. Babylon becomes a specific place, a more outwardly secular and less obviously party political place than the one someone like Butler had created. Nonetheless the connection between the two is clear.

One of the humanist's obsessions, from the time of the Reformation,

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1. See Cicero De Officiis, 53-55.
2. Quoted in Fussell, Augustan Humanism, 242.
3. For example Hudibras, "Third Part, II", pp.93-4, 153; Swift "On the Words - Brother Protestants, and Fellow Christians ...", 11.41-64, III; Tale of a Tub, 62.
4. For example, Meston THE KNIGHT, pp. 41, 46, 53.

was the 'mob', in accordance with the Tory laird's, Matthew Bramble's definition of it.

> ... a monster I never could abide,
> either in its head, tail, midriff, or
> members; I detest the whole of it,
> as a mass of ignorance, presumption,
> malice, and brutality ...
>
> (Humphry Clinker, 66)

This was orthodox humanist opinion, but at the time of Smollett and Fergusson the literati were coming round to the same line of thought. Early Enlightenment theory held that active men under prospering arts and industry enjoyed the greater sociability of the city and that material progress liberated the peasants.[1] By the third quarter of the century the expression the 'mildest slavery' of the poor was axiomatic.[2] The city was recast as corrupter of the poor who were now considered a threat, like a malignant cancer that would spread, to the upper ranks of society.[3]

"HALLOW-FAIR" and "Hallow Fair - There's fouth of braw Jockies and Jennys", "LEITH RACES", and "The ELECTION" treat of the brutalised poor of Edinburgh, through relating the immediate circumstances to general humanist principles regarding the mob and the city of chaos, and through making those circumstances part of an old humanist pattern. What arouses speculation is that all of these poems are constructed in the Christis Kirk stanza, and taking into account all of Fergusson's poetry its use is restricted to these four works. One naturally asks why. One scholar, in tracing the history of the form, has noticed

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1. For example Hume "Of Refinement in the Arts", Rotwein Hume Economics, 21-2; Millar Historical View, 207-08.
2. Sir James Steuart Political Oeconomy, I, 207, II, 401. Ferguson Civil Society, 186-87.
3. See particularly Kames Sketches, II, 67-68; Smith Wealth Of Nations, 61; Ferguson Civil Society, 186; Steuart Lanark, 316.

that the Christis Kirk stanza began as, and remained, a burlesque of peasant rites and customs, written from an aristocrat's point of view.[1] This is undoubtedly true. It was a form adopted by nobles: James I (Christ's Kirk On The Green and Peblis To The Play, Drummond of Hawthornden (Polemo-Middinia)[2], Sir Francis Semple of Beltrees ("The Blythsome Bridal"), being the oustanding examples. Moreover, these particular nobles were defenders of a Royalist culture whose historical perspective assigned the mob a lowly status, and whose sense of humour, where it was concerned, inclined to the brutal, so deeply was it rooted in fear and anxiety. A social historian would recognise consistency in moving from Drummond's strictures on the fickle commons and lawless multitude in the History Of Scotland[3] to his peasant satire, Polemo-Middinia. Such consistency was self-evident to the eighteenth century Scots humanist poets who, in fact, looked back to Drummond and the Royalist satirists in writing their own anti-Whig, anti-Presbyterian, poems. For example, William Meston's MOB CONTRA MOB (in The Poetical Works) begins with a quote from Polemo-Middinia.

> O qualis hurly-burly fuit! si forte vidisses
> Pypantes, arsas, + flavo sanguine breekas
> Dripantes, hominumque heartas ad proelia fainas. (p.197)

Fergusson, notably, quotes from precisely the same passage in his motto to "The KING's BIRTH-DAY in Edinburgh.". That the Christis Kirk poem became a literary vehicle of Royalist social philosophy is apparent in the passage from Meston's THE NIGHT OF THE KIRK: OR,

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1. See Allan H. Maclaine "The Christis Kirk Tradition: Its Evolution in Scots Poetry to Burns", SSL, II (July 1964 - April 1965) 3-18, 111-124, 163-182, 234-250.
2. Maclaine "Christis Kirk Tradition", 118.
3. See especially 11, 20, 57.

THE Ecclesiastical ADVENTURES of Sir John Presbyter, which portrays the Whig state of nature in the familiar terms of the peasant antics of Christ's Kirk On The Green.

> Long since, before the procreation
> Of men by modern generation,
> 'Twixt male and female was invented,
> With which we now must be contented;
> There was a time, so says our Knight,
> And swears that he is in the right,
> When things were in the state of nature,
> And mother Earth, that pregnant creature,
> Brought forth in ditches, fens, and bogs,
> Great swarms of men as thick as frogs:
> Equally aged, strong, and wise,
> Exactly of the self-same size,
> Right sturdy louts, untoward clowns,
> Who us'd to knock each others crowns,
> Still jangling, wrangling, scolding, hussing,
> Wrestling, boxing, kicking, cussing,
> Just like that crop of murdering fellows,
> Who certainly deserv'd the gallows,
> For knocks and blood, and wounds and death,
> That sprung from the dragon's teeth ...
>
> (p.24)

At the conclusion of the rabble's meeting in BABELL; OR THE ASSEMBLY Archibald Pitcairne conjures up Christ's Kirk On The Green for satirical effect.

> Such hubbub yet was never seen,
> But in the dayes of Rullian Green ...
>
> (ll.1352-53)

The bond between the Christis Kirk form and the Royalists' view of the Whig rabble in the Scots humanist's literary imagination was firm and tenacious, holding securely through the age of Fergusson, via Watson's Choice Collection, Ramsay, Alexander Nicol, and John Skinner. As a humanist Fergusson, in using this old form subtly, carried further the satirical assault on a debased commons.

The song "Hallow Fair" is a series of loosely connected verses modelled on "The Blythsome Bridal", and merits little attention other than to observe a few matters of form. As in the Royalist satires on

the Puritan and Presbyterian much of the humour resides in the peasant's attempting unsuccessfully to assume the position of his betters: most often he adopts the role of knight, like Hudibras or Sir John Presbyter in Meston's THE KNIGHT OF THE KIRK, or, here, Fergusson's Wattie who fancies himself a cavalier.

> There was WATTIE the muirland laddie,
> That rides on the bonny grey cout,
> With sword by his side like a cadie,
> To drive in the sheep and the knout.
> His doublet sae weel it did fit him,
> It scarcely came down to mid thigh,
> With hair pouther'd, hatt and a feather,
> And housing at courpon and tee.
> Sing farrel, & c.
>
> But bruckie play'd boo to bausie,
> And aff scour'd the cout like the win':
> Poor WATTIE he fell in the causie,
> And birs'd a' the bains in his skin,
> His pistols fell out of the hulsters,
> And were a' bedaub'd with dirt;
> The folks they came round him in clusters,
> Some leugh, and cry'd, Lad, was you hurt?
> Sing farrel, & c.
>
> But cout wad let nae body steer him,
> He was ay sae wanton and skeigh;
> The packmans stands he o'erturn'd them,
> And gard a' the Jocks stand a-beech;
> Wi' sniring behind and before him,
> For sic is the metal of brutes:
> Poor WATTIE, and wae's me for him,
> Was fain to gang hame in his boots.
> Sing farrel, & c.
>
> (11.19-45)

The horse upsets the apple cart; the knight is flung into the dirt; the mob, depersonalised, in 'clusters' (1.34) gloat with brutal indifference and 'leugh' (1.35), suggesting, as in Henryson's fables, some degree of moral turpitude; later, shopkeepers snub the country folk (11.52-3); 'Mess JOHN' consorts with 'auld Nick' (1.62); a droll courtship occurs, and Wattie marries Maggie in a most unexpected fashion.

But wha wou'd e'er thought it o' him,
That e'er he had rippled the lint?

(11.68-9)

In their tomfoolery these rude clowns act out a travesty of the Tory social order, overturning all mores of a society whose very existence is dependent upon submission and acceptance of the status quo. The humour can only be fully appreciated by a society with such a fixed view that the socially out of place is unthinkable.

Christis Kirk provided a form well tailored to the social philosophy of the Scots humanists: the later Royalists and Episcopal wits gradually converted James I's and Drummond's rabble into specific Whig and Presbyterian types; and Fergusson, more the rationalist of his age, adapted their embellished form into a broader based satire on the changing society in his midst. "HALLOW-FAIR" is an admirable example of this. Its beginning recalls the first several stanzas of "CHRIST's KIRK ON THE GREEN" which - before they give way to pandemonium - sketch an idyllic scene of peasants spruced-up and gaily dressed for a day's wooing.

AT Hallowmas, whan nights grow lang,
And starnies shine fu' clear,
Whan fock, the nippin cald to bang,
Their winter hap-warms wear,
Near Edinbrough a fair there hads,
I wat there's nane whase name is,
For strappin dames and sturdy lads,
And cap and stoup, mair famous
Than it that day.

Upo' the tap o' ilka lum
The sun began to keek,
And bad the trig made maidens come
A sightly joe to seek
At Hallow-Fair, whare browsters rare
Keep gude ale on the gantries,
And dinna scrimp ye o' a skair
O' kebbucks frae their pantries,
Fu' saut that day.

Here country John in bonnet blue,
    An' eke his Sunday's claise on,
Rins after Meg wi rokelay new,
    An' sappy kisses lays on;
She'll tauntin say, Ye silly coof!
    Be o' your gab mair spairin;
He'll tak the hint, and criesh her loof
    Wi' what will buy her fairin,
        To chow that day.

(ll.1-27)

Fergusson's 'strappin dames and sturdy lads' (1.7), playfully courting under 'clear' skies (1.2) and rising sunlight (1.11), and amidst great plenty, are part of a pastoral vision quite unlike that of James I's in that it deliberately and emphatically equates pastoral with Scotland's past culture. We must remember that the occasion itself for the poem was Hallowmas, the Festival of All Saints or All Hallows; originally a Celtic and later a Christian festival celebrating the first night of winter, when the crops were in and all farm hands were safely nestled in their winter quarters. It was a holiday of thanksgiving and of purification from evil influences; an event belonging to an era when Scotland was a Catholic and Episcopal nation. An age past is conjured up in the solemnity of the opening stanza, with its faint echoes of John Burel's "THE DISCRIPTION OF THE QVEENS MAIESTIES MAIST HONORABLE ENTRY INTO THE TOVN OF EDINBVRGH VPON THE 19. DAY OF MAII, 1590.".

AT Edinburgh, as micht be seene,
    Upon the ninetene day of Mai,
    Our Prences Spous, and Soueraigne Qveen,
Hir nobil entry maid that day,
Maist honorable, was hir conuoy,
With gladnes gret, triumph and ioy.

(Watson's Choice Collection, II
ll.1-6)

In fact past traditions of church and state, and of community, are held up as a model of civilisation. The introduction makes pastoral of a medieval or post-medieval Edinburgh. Rhetorically, and this coincides with the idea of seeking the refuge of the town during Hallowmas,

Edinburgh calls to mind a proverbial Scots country cottage, as lads and lasses move from winter's 'nippin cald' (1.3) into the old town and its 'pantries' full of generous portions of 'kebbuck' and 'gude ale' (11.15-17). Again we have Fergusson's rhetorical equation of old Edinburgh with shelter, and shelter with civilisation. Under this shelter - within this society - are health and plenty, honesty and ingenuousness, clarity of perception and freedom of communication.

From stanza IV the mood changes immediately: the timeless pastoral of the past develops into a mordant, Christis Kirk style, satire on the present society vis-à-vis its institutions, the dealers and the City Guard. Moreover, the satire on the institutions is overtly anti-Whig. Lines 28-54 are agog with the dissimulation of the dealers, 'fu' gleg aff hand/To trick the silly fallows' (11.30-31); alluring the crowds with their glib salesmanship, and probably swindling them through other artifices as well (e.g. 11.51-4).

Here chapmen billies tak their stand,
    An' shaw their bonny wallies;
Wow, but they lie fu' gleg aff hand
    To trick the silly fallows:
Heh, Sirs! what cairds and tinklers come,
    An' ne'er-do-weel horse-coupers,
An' spae-wives fenzying to be dumb,
    Wi' a' siclike landloupers,
                To thrive that day.

Here Sawny cries, frae Aberdeen;
    "Come ye to me fa need:
"The brawest shanks that e'er were seen
    "I'll sell ye cheap an' guid.
"I wyt they are as protty hose
    "As come frae weyr or leem:
"Here tak a rug, and shaw's your pose:
    "Forseeth, my ain's but teem
                "An' light this day."

Ye wives, as ye gang thro' the fair,
    O mak your bargains hooly!
O' a' thir wylie lowns beware,
    Or fegs they will ye spulzie.
For fairn-year Meg Thamson got,

Frae thir mischievous villains,
A scaw'd bit o' a penny note,
That lost a score o' shillins
To her that day.

This unflattering picture of the traders stands in glaring opposition to Whig mercantile ideals of the time. Captain Topham, for instance, who appears to have accepted several of the Whig principles of his companions in Edinburgh, lauds the pedlars, who sell articles to 'lower classes of people, at a great profit to themselves, as well as ultimately enriching their own country'.[1] Fergusson's pedlars have more the character of William Lithgow's 'Disembling puritanicall merchands' (section title in "SCOTLANDS WELCOME TO HER NATIUE SONNE") and generally the Presbyterian dealers of the Royalist poets. At the height of the section (ll.55-72) the counterpastoral merges with the mock heroic.

The dinlin drums alarm our ears,
The serjeant screechs fu' loud,
"A' gentlemen and volunteers
"That wish your country gude,
"Come here to me, and I sall gie
"Twa guineas and a crown,
"A bowl o' punch, that like the sea
"Will soum a lang dragoon
"Wi' ease this day."

The basis of these lines, which treat of the Highlander in the vein of Dougal Graham,[2] another little-known eighteenth century poet, springs from three sources, all relating to the decline and corruption of Highland culture through the application of Whig policies: 1. the clearing of the Highlands with the rise of the capitalist lairds, and subsequent emergence of a dispossessed, estranged Highland poor in the towns, 2. the irretrievable loss of a vigorous, militant and independently

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1. Letters, 173.
2. See especially "THE TURNIMSPRIKE", "TUGAL M'TAGGER", The Collected Writings of Dougal Graham (2 vols, Glasgow 1883) I.

minded Highlander after two abortive rebellions, the '15 and '45,

3. the creation of the Town Guard, an abusive Whig police, comprised mainly of evicted Highlanders, and formed after the 1715 rebellion for maintaining order in the community.

Overall the section sets out to portray modern Whig Edinburgh as another Babylon, like the Presbyterian Babylon of the Royalist poets, a chaos of obstructed communication and disorienting noise. 'Sawny cries' (l.37) 'dinlin drums' cause 'alarm', the sergeant 'screeches fu' loud' (ll.55-6), horses 'prance and nicker' (l.64), mad drunks 'rant an' roar' (l.67), 'gablin' wives and kiddies produce 'yellowchin and din' (ll.68-9). The build up is one long crescendo of noise that eclipses sensation, as in Pitcairne's BABELL (e.g. ll. 872-879). Furthermore the noise is suggestively ordered. Modern institutional noises of Sawny, a figurehead of the Northeast weavers (ll.37-45), and then the City Guard (ll.55-63), began the sequence. Through them animals of the institution were disturbed (ll.64-5). Lastly, the noise culminated in the community reacting to their surroundings. The Whig system creates pandemonium. This is the message.

> Without the cuissers prance and nicker,
> An' our the ley-rig scud;
> In tents the carles bend the bicker,
> An' rant an' roar like wud.
> Then there's sic yellowchin and din,
> Wi' wives and wee-anes gablin,
> That ane might true they were a-kin
> To a' the tongues at Babylon,
> Confus'd that day.
>
> (ll.64-72)

The two images that dominate this stanza deftly underline the theme of a disjointed and incohesive society. The City Guard's horses, no longer part of the soil as farm animals can naturally be, in their symbiotic relationship with it, scud 'An' our the ley-rig (l.65), as intrusively out of place now as the new 'herds wi' kent or colly'

were in "THE LEE RIGG" (l.9). The other image, 'Babylon' (l.71), that shibboleth of humanist literature, adverts to a breakdown of social intercourse unworthy of a civilised society. The principle of order is gone as all classes blend into the contemptible mob.

At this juncture there is a recapitulation of the pastoral of the introduction and the shelter = civilisation = old Edinburgh, motif -

> Whan Phoebus ligs in Thetis lap,
> Auld Reikie gies them shelter,
> Whare cadgily they kiss the cap,
> An' ca't round helter-skelter.
>
> (ll.73-6)

- but again to be undercut by the mock heroic, effectively echoing parts of Butler's Hudibras. In fact Hudibras appears to be at the back of the poet's mind here -

> The Sun had long since in the Lap
> Of Thetis, taken out his Nap ...
>
> (Hudibras, "Second Part, Canto II", p.69)

- and throughout the poem.

> To this Town People did repair
> On dayes of Market or of Fair,
> And to crack'd Fiddle and hoarse Tabor
> In merriment did drudge and labour:
> But now a sport more formidable
> Had rak'd together Village rabble.
> 'Twas an old way of Recreating
> Which learned Butchers call Bear-baiting ...
>
> (Hudibras, "First Part, Canto I", p.51)

Clearly, in the mock heroic battle, the combatants of "HALLOW-FAIR" hail from Butler's Presbyterian knights and their battle of bruises rather than of blood (Hudibras, "First Part", I, p.29, II, pp.131-32, III, pp.204, 231-14). In their ironical, overstated blow-by-blow commentary, both humanist poets bewail the passing of the military spirit; the substitution of the rabble for the cavalier, or here, the rabble and the pathetic Highlander for the cavalier and the Highland

warrior; the degeneracy of the lower orders.

Jock Bell gaed furth to play his freaks,
    Great cause he had to rue it,
For frae a stark Lochaber aix
He gat a clamihewit,
                Fu' sair that night.

"Ohon!" quo' he, "I'd rather be
    "By sword or bagnet stickit,
"Than hae my crown or body wi'
    "Sic deadly weapons nicket."
Wi' that he gat anither straik
    Mair weighty than before,
That gar'd his feckless body aik,
    An' spew the reikin gore,
                Fu' red that night.

He peching on the cawsey lay,
    O' kicks and cuffs weel sair'd;
A Highland aith the serjeant gae,
    "She maun pe see our guard."
Out spak the weirlike corporal,
    "Pring in ta drunken sot."
They trail'd him ben, an' by my saul,
    He paid his drunken groat
                For that neist day.

(11.77-99)

The overstatement makes pathetic buffoons of Jock and the soldiers, as the 'stark Lochaber aix' delivers a 'clamihewit' that leaves Jock 'sair' (11.79-81) and the second 'Mair weighty' blow only makes him 'spew' (11.87, 89).

At the same time the 'weirlike' (1.95) soldier whose 'deadly weapons' nick (1.85) and who invokes a once meaningful 'Highland aith' (1.93), evokes more than is permissable for the high jinks of Christis Kirk; more that befits the high seriousness of the latter day Scots humanist. The last note struck in "HALLOW-FAIR" is accordingly one of 'shame that day' (1.117). Shame follows from the total degradation of the community: no one is as he once was, the pitiful Highlander, or the 'sturdy lads' (1.7) of the introduction, who have become 'feckless' (1.88) bodies. All are held fast within the jaws of the irony.

Good fock, as ye come frae the fair,
    Bide yont frae this black squad;
There's nae sic savages elsewhere
    Allow'd to wear cockade.
Than the strong lion's hungry maw,
    Or tusk o' Russian bear,
Frae their wanruly fellin paw
    Mair cause ye hae to fear
            Your death that day.

(11.100-108)

With the tongue-in-cheek address, 'Good fock' (1.100) and the over-stated admonition of 'death' (1.108), the final thrust of the mock heroic is delivered to the rabble at large. Rhetorically, Edinburgh is a jungle: those in command are 'savages' (1.102) and wild beasts (11.104-06), like the bears of Butler's or Colvil's Presbyterian assemblies - a common image in humanist literature[1] -; and those beneath them have become their victims and accomplices.

Written eight months later "LEITH RACES" is a companion poem to "HALLOW-FAIR", the connection actually being drawn in the second stanza where the rural muse, Mirth, slyly and ironically, wonders at the poet's inability to compose, having 'sung o' HALLOW-FAIR' (1.12) and yet having before him the equally promising subject of the races on Leith-Sands. As with the previous work the pastoral foil appears in the beginning but this time in the form of a pastoral vision, bearing some relation, Matthew McDiarmid observes, to Dunbar's The Thrissil And The Rose and to the opening lines of the ballad Thomas The Rhymer.[2] Undoubtedly Fergusson had Ramsay's own "Leith Races" in mind and D'Urfey's introductory lines in his pastoral song, "Sally's Answer to Sawney: A New Song" (Wit and Mirth, II, 240) as he set the stage for the contrast he develops between an ideal past and unsavoury present.

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1. Hudibras, "First Part", I, p.65, III, p.246; Mock Poem, pp.55, 66, 85.
2. Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTES 1-45", p.293.

As I ganged o'er the Links of Leith
One Morn, was fresh and rosie;
The Birds did sing, the Flowers did breath
So sweet, I sought a Poesie:
I thought I heard one Sing my praise,
And Found 'twas sweet and bonny;
And sounded Sally with such grace,
It must be Charming Sawney.

On the other hand, in terms of the stanzaic form and the humanist rhetoric of blood and dirt, Andrew Erskine's "The Lawyer's Overthrow; or the Advocate's Fall at the Leith Races" was part of the tradition Fergusson bore in mind. Stanzas like this are exemplary.

All in the dirt he woful lay,
In sand and waves he sprawl'd,
His milk white coat was turn'd to gray,
And piteously he bawl'd:
But when again he catch'd his steed,
And once more set his a__se on,
So rapidly his ears did bleed,
He roar'd out for a parson.
(X)[1]

The poem opens with a vision (ll.1-45), the purpose of which is to define the state of nature and describe the muse of traditional Scots poetry as the humanist sees them: in terms of order and civilisation, perception and communication, freedom and joy, tradition and patriotism.

IN JULY month, ae bonny morn,
Whan Nature's rokelay green
Was spread o'er ilka rigg o' corn
To charm our roving een;
Glouring about I saw a quean,
The fairest 'neath the lift;
Her EEN ware o' the siller sheen,
Her SKIN like snawy drift,
Sae white that day.
(ll.1-9)

"I dwall amang the caller springs
"That weet the LAND o' CAKES,
"And aften tune my canty strings
"At BRIDALS and LATE-WAKES:

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1. In A Collection Of Original Poems, by Rev. M. Blacklock and other Scotch Gentlemen (2 vols, Edinburgh 1760) II, p.41.

"They ca' me MIRTH; I ne'er was kend
"To grumble or look sour,
"But blyth wad be a lift to lend,
"Gif ye wad sey my pow'r
"An' pith this day."

(11.28-36)

Nature's relationship with her crops is filial; as a good parent - note the clothing rhetoric - she cloaks each of her offspring (11.2-3). Mirth's role is likewise as a spiritual mother, presiding at 'BRIDALS and LATE-WAKES' (1.31), both festive gatherings in eighteenth century Scotland. This protective, enclosing and nurturing, female principle of nature and civilisation, so common in Fergusson's poetry, is, if we follow Lewis Mumford's definitions, a way of seeing an ideal society as a village, like the town at the beginning of "HALLOW-FAIR", rather than as the city, fortified and masculine, 'a buzzing swarm of 'I's'.

> Village life is embedded in the primary association of birth and place, blood and soil. Each member of it is a whole human being, performing all the functions appropriate to each phase of life, from birth to death, in alliance with natural forces that he venerates and submits to .... Before the city came into existence, the village had brought forth the neighbour: he who lives near at hand, within calling distance, sharing the crises of life, watching over the dying, weeping sympathetically for the dead, rejoicing at a marriage feast or a childbirth.[1]

Additionally, we first confront here the dominant image of the poem - dirt - mainly in relation to water imagery, another standard humanist symbol of societal harmony or disharmony.[2] Hence Mirth, with her eyes of 'siller sheen' and skin of snow 'Sae white' (11.7-9), dwells

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1. The City in History (Harmondsworth 1979) 21-22, 24.
2. See "Denham: COOPER'S HILL", 11.343-58, in Wasserman Subtler Language, also p.68. Cf. Pope "Windsor-Forest", 11.397-402.

'amang the caller springs' (1.28).[1] She is an embodiment of clarity, freedom as of flowing water - she is 'wanton' and 'free' (1.26) - and 'pow'r' (1.35), especially over music and poetry and the innocent joys of life so often proscribed by the Kirk.

'Foul WATER' (1.107), the characteristic image of the secular city, suggests, naturally, stagnancy, an obstruction of the natural processes, hence disorder. After one stanza on the light-hearted loveplay of the servant maids the pastoral mechanism recoils with its wonted reversion to the satirical and mock heroic.

> Ere servant maids had wont to rise
> To seeth the breakfast kettle,
> Ilk dame her brawest ribbons tries,
> To put her on her mettle,
> Wi' wiles some silly chiel to trap,
> (And troth he's fain to get her,)
> But she'll craw kniefly in his crap,
> Whan, wow! he canna flit her
> Frae hame that day.
>
> Now, mony a scaw'd and bare-ars'd lown
> Rise early to their wark,
> Enough to fley a muckle town,
> Wi' dinsome squeel and bark.
> "Here is the true an' faithfu' list
> "O' noblemen and Horses;
> "Their eild, their weight, their height, their grist,
> "That rin for PLATES or PURSES
> "Fu' fleet that day."
>
> (11.46-63)

Clear communication is impossible amidst the perception distorting noise of the city. Notice too that this town, with its 'dinsome

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1. Max Byrd notices the importance of the clear water image in the minds of even the average eighteenth century reader in his analysis of Defoe. '... outside history even the most hard-headed of Defoe's businessmen would remember that through the New Jerusalem of John's Revelation flows "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal," fertilizing the garden of life on either side and forming a figurative street in the city', London Transformed: Images of the City in the Eighteenth Century (New Haven and London 1978) 12.

squeel and bark' (1.58), is metaphorically populated by beasts, among whom there can be neither communication nor order. Among them the older societal bonds of truth and faith (1.59) are mis-applied to the mere list of races, and in equating 'Noblemen and Horses' (1.60) they dehumanise themselves while implying that noblemen in their society are no better than beasts of burden or of sport.[1] At the end of the day foul water results from the gamblers 'drown(ing) themsel's in debt' (1.17). The happy conjunction, and intentional ambiguity of, 'Noblemen and Horses' infers that both 'rin' at the sport of fortune (11.62-3); both are externally manipulated, as horses do not drive themselves. Later, lines 154-62 repeat the motif as 'Baith men and steeds are raingit' (1.155) who, when the day is spent, will find themselves victims of the 'sport' (1.160) rather than sportsmen. As the section unfolds, our eyes are deflected once more to the broken remnants of Highland soldiers, the City Guard.

To WHISKY PLOOKS that brunt for wooks
On town-guard soldiers faces,
Their barber bauld his whittle crooks,
An' scrapes them for the races:
Their STUMPS erst us'd to filipegs,
Are dight in spaterdashes,
Whase barkent hides scarce fend their legs
Frae weet, and weary plashes
O' dirt that day.

"Come, hafe a care (the captain cries),
"On guns your bagnets thraw;
"Now mind your manual exercise,
"An' marsh down raw by raw."
And as they march he'll glowr about,
'Tent a' their cuts and scars:
'Mang them fell money a gausy snout
Has gusht in birth-day wars,
Wi' blude that day.

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1. Cf. Butler Hudibras, "First Part", II, 106. 'He (the Knight) and his Horse were of a piece'. In the Ruddiman's edition of The History Of The Affairs of Church and State In Scotland (Edinburgh 1734) Bishop Keith introduces a discussion on free will with the question, 'Will ze heirfor a Man to be as a ... Horss...?', "Book III - Appendix", 251.

Her Nanesel maun be carefu' now,
Nor maun she pe misleard,[1]
Sin baxter lads hae seal'd a vow
To skelp and clout the guard:
I'm sure AULD REIKIE kens o' nane
That wou'd be sorry at it,
Tho' they should dearly pay the kane,
An' get their tails weel sautit
And sair thir days.

(11.64-90)

Again, societal bonds - order and loyalty - are at issue here, especially as they are related in the tension between pretense and reality. The guardsman, so redolent of the kirk knight hopelessly endeavouring to assume the cavalier's place in society, cannot quite fill his boots. In attempting to do so he is flung back into the dirt,[2] into a position on the social scale far beneath his original dignity. The very microscopic focus on the scraping of his 'PLOOKS' (1.64) with a razor gainsays the cavalier image while the claims to valiant soldiering are undercut, as in "HALLOW-FAIR" , by the disparity between his redoubtable weaponry, his guns and bayonets, and their use in 'birth-day wars', inflicting bloody noses and faces (11.79-80). Equally absurd is the rigorous military discipline, marching 'down raw by raw' (1.76), for the singularly unmilitary objectives borne in mind. Furthermore, 'weet, and weary plashes/O' dirt' (11.71-2); the Highland mispronunciation 'marsh' (1.76); gushing 'blude' (11.80-1) link the Guard with stagnant water and 'dirt' (1.72) imagery, the dirt of the street which covers their bodies (1.70). The change from 'filipegs' to 'spaterdashes' (11.68-9) is seen as a retrograde move,

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1. This mock Highland - literary - dialect also effectively alludes to the broken and disspirited Highlanders of Dougal Graham's poetry.

2. See, for example, Colvil Mock Poem, p.96. 'Through Dung they march like a bold Fellow / Till Shoes and Stockings grow Gold yellow'; and Meston THE KNIGHT, p.53. 'An ignis fatuus kind of preacher / Who led his kirk, where few could reach her, / Thro' dub and mire, and bogs and mosses...'.

and in a wider context is symbolic of the transformation of the Highland warrior into the champion of birth-day wars. At the same time Fergusson holds no brief for the ordinary cits, like the 'baxter lads' (l.84) whose notions of loyalty are equally misguided. This is conveyed through expressions like 'seal'd a vow' (1.84) and 'pay the kane' (1.88). The baxters' 'vow' (1.84) over a petty squabble with the Guard proves their word as shallow and unworthy as the 'Highland aith' (1.93) of the sergeant in "HALLOW-FAIR". Similarly, the paying of the kane, the duty paid by the tenant to his landlord, stands as a symbol of the old laird-tenant relationship of protection and fidelity, so that linguistically the lines describe an ironic relationship of the baxters and the prison system, and again underline their distance from the genuine loyalties of the past. Note that rhetorically the baxters are birds (1.89), creatures of pity rather than scorn, like the overpowered 'farmers sons, as yap as sparrows' (1.31) in "The RISING of the SESSION", or Sandie in "AN ECLOGUE".

By lines 91-135 we have advanced by stages from the natural order of the past (ll.1-45) and the modern's pretense of order (ll.46-90), to an utter state of chaos and social upheaval, reminiscent of "HALLOW-FAIR" (ll.27-54) on the dealers. And there is the same intention to designate the setting as specifically Whig. Four key issues help to effect this in lines 91-99.

> The tinkler billies i' the BOW
> Are now less eidant clinking,
> As lang's their pith or siller dow,
> They're daffin', and they're drinking.
> Bedown LEITH-WALK what burrochs reel
> Of ilka trade and station,
> That gar their wives an' childer feel
> Toom weyms for their libation
> O' drink thir days.

The first issue pertains to the peasant and productivity. Since the Whig utilitarians maintained adamantly that their policies transformed the slothful subsistence farmer - Brandy's 'Bare-ars'd and barefoot' tenants ("A DRINK ECLOGUE", 1.72) - into frugal and industrious urbanites, Fergusson begins this section, characteristically, with tinkers growing 'less eidant' (1.92) and wrecklessly extravagant. Next he surveys the social effects of Whiggism according to the popular Tory formula,[1] his reeling crowds 'Of ilka trade and station' (1.96) being a standard Tory depiction of Whig society, like Smollett's

> ... general mixture of all degrees assembled in our public rooms, without distinction of rank or fortune ... a monstrous jumble of heterogeneous principles; a vile mob of noise and impertinence, without decency or subordination.
>
> In short there is no distinction or subordination left - The different departments of life are jumbled together - The hod-carrier, the low mechanic, the tapster, the publican, the shop-keeper, the pettifogger, the citizen, and courtier, all tread upon the kibes of one another: actuated by the demons of profligacy and licentiousness, they are seen every where rambling, riding, rolling, rushing, justling, mixing, bouncing, cracking, and crashing in one vile ferment of stupidity and corruption - All is tumult and hurry; one would imagine they were impelled by some disorder of the brain, that will not suffer them to be at rest.
>
> (Humphry Clinker, 78, 119)

Another meaning may be read into these reeling crowds: these men, like the noblemen who can be compared to horses, submerge their own individuality and freedom; Mirth 'reel(s)' of her own choice (1.41), but these crowds 'reel' (1.95) in social situations of their own creation though not of their own choosing. The humanist believes in free will; the Whig in determinism. What is meant by this, then, and this is a recurrent theme in Fergusson, is that the Whig finds it easier to submit to external influences; easier to forego control

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1. See for example Byrd London Transformed, 25-6.

of himself. Hence he does not perceive the necessary causal relationship between his riotous actions and his family's starvation - nor later, that he is poisoning himself (ll.109-112) - because he does not think or act freely. Incidentally, the break-up of the family was a matter of grave concern to the Whigs;[1] as nature at the beginning was depicted as a caring parent, it also marks the departure of modern society from the state of nature.

In the lines that follow, the Whig notion of business as a servant of the people is exploded. Moving down Leith Walk we meet those cunning pedlars so thrang in "HALLOW-FAIR". The browster wives themselves bear a striking resemblance to their counterparts in Meston's kirk satire.

> The browster wives thegither harl
> A' trash that they can fa' on;
> They rake the grounds o' ilka barrel,
> To profit by the lawen ...
>
> (ll.100-103)

> He could find out who stole his gear,
> By turning of the sieve and sheer;
> And could teach browster-wives a charm,
> Which they might use without all harm,
> To make their drink go off the better,
> To put more malt in, and less water.
>
> ("THE KNIGHT OF THE KIRK", p.39)

The browster wives of Leith go the length of poisoning their customers with 'drumbly gear' and 'ill ale' (ll.106, 109). Apropos of what was said earlier about the peasant's acumen, he can hardly be expected to recognise a sinister alliance between the browster wives and the Buchan fishmongers, driving him back to more 'trash' (l.101).

> The Buchan bodies thro' the beech
> Their bunch of Findrums cry,
> An' skirl out baul', in Norland speech,
> "Gueed speldings, fa will buy."

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1. See, for example, Hutcheson Moral Philosophy, II, 76.

An', by my saul, they're nae wrang gear
To gust a stirrah's mow;
Weel staw'd wi' them, he'll never spear
The price o' being fu'
Wi' drink that day.

(ll.118-126)

Taking its lead from these suppressed associations which the poor urbanite cannot perceive, lines 127-135 see the reeling and deranged puppet of the Whig system falling flat on his face.

Now wyly wights at ROWLY POWL,
An' flingin' o' the DICE,
Here brake the banes o' mony a soul
Wi' fa's upo' the ice:
At first the gate seems fair an' straught,
So they had fairly till her;
But wow! in spite o' a' their maught,
They're rookit o' their siller
An' goud that day.

With this the poet rubs salt into several gaping Whig wounds. Gambling was one of the substitutable media of Whig society affording 'a pleasure', Hume states, 'from the same principles as hunting and philosophy!',[1] though none of the literati were very sanguine about the idea. The gambling substitute ran counter to their industry and progress ideal; Kames seeing it as a vice of the idle moderns, Hutcheson as a detriment to the nation's welfare, Beattie as decadence and savagery, a slipping back into the anti-social behaviour of Hottentots.[2] Philosophically speaking, predestination and the denial of the will, major issues of dissension between Episcopacy and Presbytery, were commonly expressed through the gaming metaphor, as in Mackenzie of Rosehaugh's 'Fanaticks, who think, that every Throw

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1. Human Nature, II, 212-13.

2. Kames Sketches, I, 279; Hutcheson Moral Philosophy, II, 75; Beattie AN ESSAY ON THE NATURE and IMMUTABILITY OF TRUTH (London 1772) 463; Elements Of Moral Science, I, 353.

of the Dice is influenced by a special Providence'.[1] With the mention of gaming, and the gaming metaphor, the Tory poet was clearly chafing the Whigs for a system based upon determinism, which did not act as the invisible hand of providence, and blaming them for perverting the original nature of free men. Furthermore, the Whigs, the poet implies throughout the section, are to be censured for sabotaging the very social ideals they hold dear. In point of fact, the images of stagnancy and disease - 'trash', 'grounds' (ll.101-102), 'Foul WATER' (l.107), 'ill ale', 'deid' (l.109), 'pain' (l.117) - underline the urbanites' incapacity to act unimpaired and freely.

Lines 136-180 neatly counterbalance the opening pastoral as Whig society, the pretense of Whig order - its unwholesome social mixture, is portrayed as a false state of nature, a mere façade, which, for his lack of 'prudentia' the town-dweller does not recognise. This is conveyed through the preponderance of descriptive natural metaphors: carriages moving like 'wind' (l.137), whores appearing like flowers (l.140).

> Around whare'er ye fling your een,
> The HAIKS like wind are scourin';
> Some chaises honest folk contain,
> An' some hae mony a WHORE in;
> Wi' rose and lilly, red and white,
> They gie themselves sic fit airs,
> Like DIAN, they will seem perfite;
> But its nae goud that glitters
> Wi' them thir days.
>
> (ll.136-144)[2]

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1. Works, II, 483. Cf. Johnson's hostility to the determinist philosophy of the Presbyterian in Fussell Augustan Humanism, 93-4.

2. On false appearance cf. Swift "The PROGRESS of BEAUTY ...", ll.65-80, I, 226-28; "The LADY's DRESSING ROOM", ll.129-44, II; Colvil Mock Poem, p.23. Swift also refers to '... the usual Fate of Coaches over-finely painted and gilt; that the transitory Gazers have so dazzled their Eyes, and fill'd their Imaginations with the outward Lustre, as neither to regard or consider, the Person or the Parts of the Owner within'. A TALE of a TUB, 66. Cf. Joseph Mitchell "To the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Lauderdale", Poems On Several Occasions (2 vols, London 1729) I, 264.

At this point the ignorant rabble are pronounced Whigs, and Stewart law, which was preserved by the 'wise recorder' (l.150), by Jacobites and Episcopalians like Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, is celebrated as the last vestige of 'order' (l.152).

> The LYON here, wi' open paw,
> May cleek in mony hunder,
> Wha geck at SCOTLAND and her law,
> His wyly talons under;
> For ken, tho' JAMIE's laws are auld,
> (Thanks to the wise recorder),
> His Lyon yet roars loud and bawld,
> To had the Whigs in order
> Sae prime this day.
>
> (ll.145-153)

That last Whigs 'Sae prime this day' (l.153) - prime in the drunken sense but, also, ironically, supreme - crowns the stagnant water imagery and relates it, even more explicitly, to Butler's Presbyterians and Independents whose 'Zeal corrupts like standing water' (Hudibras, "Third Part", II, 131). Whig order is disorder. Thus 'clangor clear' (l.154), an oxymoron defining a condition in which only the unclear is perceptible, signals another entrance of the Guard who, like the whores, are clad in nature's colours (ll.156-58) and who, like the noblemen before, are 'raingit' (l.155) with horses, as part of a lower or false natural order.

> To town-guard DRUM of clangor clear,
> Baith men and steeds are raingit;
> Some liveries red or yellow wear,
> And some are tartan spraingit:
> And now the red, the blue e'en - now
> Bids fairest for the market;
> But, 'ere the sport be done, I trow
> Their skins are gayly yarkit
> And peel'd thir days.
>
> (ll.154-162)

The other egregious displays of Whig order are Robinhood debates, an ineffectual and irrelevant substitute for community service, somewhat reminiscent of Pitcairne's Assembly.

Siclike in ROBINHOOD debates,
    Whan twa chiels hae a pingle;
E'en-now some couli gets his aits,
    An' dirt wi' words they mingle,
Till up loups he, wi' diction fu',
    There's lang and dreech contesting;
For now they're near the point in view;
    Now ten miles frae the question
            In hand that night.

(ll.163-171)

Really communication as the basis of all social interaction and order is at issue here, as it was in the new Babylon of "HALLOW-FAIR". Fergusson is wholly in agreement with a modern humanist like Lewis Mumford that

> Perhaps the best definition of the city in its higher aspects is to say that it is a place designed to offer the widest facilities for significant conversation....
>
> In a sense the dramatic dialogue is both the fullest symbol and the final justification of the city's life. For the same reason, the most revealing symbol of the city's failure, of its very non-existence as a social personality, is the absence of dialogue ...[1]

- or with Max Byrd, in his discussion of Pope and Johnson.

> At the same time they remind us that language itself is our greatest collective activity, our unmistakably human way of creating community, the city we live in....
>
> Insofar as it organizes ourselves and our experience into coherence, language excludes chaos as firmly as any mythical city walls in illo tempore; but of course the language that brings men together in cities also drives them apart sometimes, as urban crowding increases the randomness of what is said and heard, as the noise of mobs and small talk drowns or empties language of its meaning.[2]

Significantly, the 'dirt' (l.166) of the streets, and the dull torpor of mind - 'diction fu'' (l.167), finds its way into the language of the debaters as the dialogue gives way to a muck slinging match. With this we are very much in the Scots humanist rhetorical tradition,

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1. The City in History, 139, 141.
2. London Transformed, 69. See also 74, 76.

as in Colvil's Mock Poem.

> Contending with a foolish Tongue,
> Quoth he, is but a War with Dung:
> Though in the Strife ye prove victorious,
> Dirt makes your Finger-ends inglorious ...
>
> (pp.77-78)

The last lines, recounting the end of the races, differentiate, notably, between 'they' (l.172) and 'our' and 'we' (ll.177-78), the two opposing sides of Edinburgh culture and society. And in the last sketch are compressed effective images of the Whig's lack of freedom and discernment, as he ends his binge as the 'cripple' and the 'blind' (l.175),[1] and of his relation to a false nature, ironically intimated in the warming prospect of his 'een as BLUE's a BLAWART / Wi' straiks' (ll.179-80).

Published two months later, "The ELECTION", last work in the Christis Kirk group, sees the poet even closer to his anti-Whig/Presbyterian sources. In this connection 'ELECTION' is itself, of course, a highly charged word. Predestination and the elect of God naturally spring into mind, and clearly, that is the intention, given the bantering and unremitting religiosity of the poem: 'REJOICE' (l.1), 'fast' (l.4), the 'AFFIDAVIT/O' FAITH' (ll.17-18), the end lines 'death' - 'life' (ll.36, 45), 'grace' (l.59), the two blessings, 'Weels me' (l.64) and 'Weel loes me' (l.82), the line which through enjambment alights on 'Sin fu' (l.67) - sinful, the holiday 'handsel - Teysday' (l.67), the oratory of the kirk pulpit - 'de'el', 'h_ll' and 'The foul ane' (ll.70, 72, 78), 'the haly band' (l.102), 'his saul' (l.112) and 'their saul' (l.120), and finally 'death' (l.135).

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1. Butler describes the Covenanters as 'The lamest Cripples of the Brothers': Hudibras, "Third Part", III, p.123. Cf. Andrew Erskine "The Chairmen", in Blacklock Collection Of Original Poems, I. p.183.

In this instance election, ironically, entails absolute submission to the Whigs' insidious political designs. As in "The RISING of the SESSION", there is a proclamatory opening, revealing the overweening self-importance of its designers as well as the sinister control they hold over the peasants to whom it is directed. It is as if those who legislate against the peasant would have him believe that they are prepared to instantly change his circumstances of hunger and poverty. What is more the ideas implied in 'REJOICE' (l.1) and the 'fast' (l.4) justify the starvation as part of the divine plan.

> REJOICE, ye BURGHERS, ane an' a',
> Lang Look't for's come at last;
> Sair war your backs held to the wa'
> Wi' poortith an' wi' fast:
> Now ye may clap your wings an' craw,
> And gayly busk ilk' feather,
> For DEACON COCKS hae pass'd a law
> To rax an' weet your leather
> Wi' drink thir days.
>
> (ll.1-9)

With exquisite effect the Tory animal rhetoric suggests that the Whigs make animals of the poor, fostering a groveling sort of imitation and impoverishing them into submission, even assent,[1] to their ends. The several bird images - 'clap your wings an' craw, ... busk ilk' feather' (ll.5-6) - relate to desires that stem from emulation of social betters like the leader of the flock, 'COCKS' (l.7).[2]

> Haste, EPPS, quo' John, an' bring my gez,
> Take tent ye dinna't spulzie:
> Last night the barber ga't a friz,
> An' straikit it wi' ulzie.
> Hae done your PARITCH lassie Liz,

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1. The humanist believes that poverty limits the will. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 101-102.

2. Cf. Butler on the 'Rabble ... Following their Leaders'. Hudibras, "Third Part", III, p.70; or Mackenzie of Rosehaugh - '... we follow too much rather the received Opinion of others, than the Dictates of our Reason: Like Beasts we run one after another; not where we ought, but where others do: And thus we perish by Example'. Essays, Works, I, 13.

Gi'e me my sark an' gravat;
I'se be as braw's the Deacon is
Whan he taks AFFIDAVIT
O' FAITH the day.

Whar's Johnny gaun, cries neebor BESS,
That he's sae gayly bodin
Wi' new kam'd wig, weel syndet face,
Silk hose, for hamely hodin?
"Our Johny's nae sma' drink you'll guess,
"He's trig as ony muir-cock,
"An' forth to mak a Deacon, lass;
"He downa speak to poor fock
Like us the day."

(ll.10-27)

From the humanist viewpoint John's aspirations as the 'muir-cock' (l.24) are wrong because they hamper his own efforts to overcome the fraily of his nature.[1] As Fussell states, 'man is not to be made by his tailor';[2] 'outward/Appearance' (Meston The Knight, p.12), moreover, was the true mark of the Presbyterian knight, who was hopelessly misguided by others. False aspirations are one issue that disturbs the poet; the other is the systematic programme of starvation and squalid living inflicted upon the poor cits. In relating the physical and mental condition of the peasant Fergusson avails himself of insect imagery: vermin, precisely in the sense that Butler uses it, 'vermine Impotent and Blind' (Hudibras, "Third Part", II, p.116). The earlier scene swarms with buzzing s's, an atmosphere of flies and decay - 'gez - friz - Liz' - 'I'se be as braw's the Deacon is' (ll.10-18) - which shadow every act of unworthy emulation that John makes: they are an emblem of the interior man; the state of his body, mind and soul. They complement the very intimate scene inside John's home, where we enter and see close at hand the vermin among which he lives,

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1. For the Episcopal outlook on this see especially Garden Comparative Theology, 39-40.
2. Fussell Augustan Humanism, 15.

and, figuratively, the vermin of his mind as he does battle with insects in preparing himself for his new career.

> The COAT ben-by i' the kist-nook,
> That's been this towmonth swarmin,
> Is brought yence mair thereout to look,
> To fleg awa the vermin:
> Menzies o' MOTHS an' FLAES are shook,
> An' i' the floor they howder,
> Till in a birn beneath the crook
> They're singit wi' a scowder
> To death that day.
>
> (11.28-36)

Throughout the election proceedings (11.43-45, 47-49, 57-58, 65-66) the most sinister Whig device for moulding the poor town dweller is starvation. In the introductory proclamation we noticed the long '<u>poortith</u>' and '<u>fast</u>' (1.4) against which the Deacons were legislating for the day; in lines 37-45 we have an example of the legislation's practical effects.

> The canty cobler quats his sta',
> His ROZET an' his LINGANS;
> His buik has dree'd a sair, sair fa'
> Frae meals o' BREAD an' INGANS:
> Now he's a pow o' WIT an' LAW,
> An' taunts at soals an' heels;
> To WALKER's he can rin awa,
> There whang his CREAMS an' JEELS
> Wi' life that day.

The sudden metamorphosis of the cobler, physically half dead from famine, into 'a pow o' WIT an' LAW' (1.41) rings about as true as the 'wit' credited to the Presbyterian knight by Butler or Meston.[1] Even a Whig like Lord Kames would have found the cobler's changed fortunes rather suspect; as he put it, 'Man consists of soul and body, so intimately connected, that one cannot be at ease while the other suffers'.[2]

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1. See <u>Hudibras</u>, "First Part", I, pp.14-15; <u>THE KIRK KNIGHT</u>, p.12
2. <u>Sketches</u>, I, 345.

Moving into the festivities of the day we note that the ravenous hunger of these would-be politicians shores up a more general affirmation that Whig society is uncivilised. Beneath the affected refinements of dress and manner, and the semblance of order, is the brutish world of Christis Kirk, the humanist metaphor for the city of chaos.

The lads in order tak their seat,
(The de'il may claw the clungest)
They stegh an' connach sae the meat,
Their teeth mak mair than tongue haste:
Their CLAES sae cleanly dight an' feat,
An' eke their craw-black BEAVERS,
Like MASTERS mows hae found the gate
To tassels teugh wi' slavers
Fu' lang that day.

The dinner done, for brandy strang
They cry, to weet their thrapple,
To gar the stamack bide the bang,
Nor wi' its laden grapple.
The grace is said - its no o'er lang;
The claret reams in bells;
Quod DEACON let the toast round gang,
"Come, here's our NOBLE SEL'S
Weel MET the day."

Weels me o' drink, quo' COOPER Will,
My BARREL has been geyz'd ay,
An' has na gotten sic a fill
Sin fu' on handsel - Teysday:
But makes-na, now it's got a sweel,
Ae gird I shanna cast lad,
Or else I wish the horned de'el
May Will wi' kittle cast dad
To h_ll the day.

The MAGISTRATES fu' wyly are,
Their lamps are gayly blinking,
But they might as leive burn elsewhere,
Whan fock's blind fu' wi' drinking.
Our DEACON wadna ca' a chair,
The foul ane durst him na-say;
He took SHANKS-NAIG, but fient may care,
He ARSELINS kiss'd the cawsey
Wi' BIR that night.

Weel loes me o' you, souter JOCK,
For tricks ye buit be trying,
Whan greapin for his ain bed-stock,
He fa's whare WILL's wife's lying,
WILL coming hame wi' ither fock,
He saw Jock there before him;

Wi' MASTER LAIGLEN, like a brock
He did wi' stink maist smore him
Fu' strang that night.

Then wi' a' souple leathern whang
He gart them fidge and girn ay,
"Faith, Chiel, ye's no for naething gang
"Gin ye man reel my pirny."
Syne wi' a muckle alshin lang
He brodit MAGGIE's hurdies;
An' 'cause he thought her i' the wrang,
There pass'd nae bonny wordies
'Mang them that night.

Now, had some laird his lady fand
In sic unseemly courses,
It might hae loos'd the holy band,
Wi' law-suits an' DIVORCES:
But the niest day they a' shook hands,
And ilka crack did sowder,
While MEGG for drink her apron pawns,
For a' the gude-man cow'd her
Whan fu' last night.

(11.46-108)

This again is a case of men, like the City Guardsmen in the boots of the cavalier at the "LEITH RACES", not measuring up to the social positions they aspire to, with their pretence of propriety and nobility. The society lacks any claim to either. 'The lads in order' (1.46); the avowed decorum at the dinner (11.55-63); the niggling ironical comparison between peasant and noblemen - 'Like MASTERS mows' (1.52), 'our NOBLE SEL'S' (1.62), 'MASTER LAIGLEN' the urine vessel covering Jock 'wi' stink' (11.87-8); 'The MAGISTRATES fu' wyly' careless of the 'blind fu'' (11.73, 76); the flippant attitudes of the 'laird' and 'lady' to marriage and their embroilment in 'lawsuits an' DIVORCES' (11.100-03): these serve the ironical intentions of the passage which point a finger at ignobility. The effect is enhanced by the cyclical advance of the peasant from the vermin and squalor of his home back to the same condition: 'slavers over the 'CLAES sae cleanly dight an' feat' (11.50, 53), the 'stink' of the urine vessel's contents which nearly 'smore him' that night (11.88-90). In his

jibes the poet implies that Whiggism is self-defeating. The passage begins with an end of that most coveted of all Whig attributes, industry - the cobler 'taunts at soals an' heels' (l.42), 'COOPER Will' scoffs at barrel making (ll.69-72) - and, as in "AN ECLOGUE" (ll.79-80), finishes on a note which adds gravity to the humour: the piecemeal selling of the household - Megg pawning her apron for drink (ll.106-08). Additionally, those infallible guides of the Whig/Presbyterian - the moral sense, the inner light, as it was often called - appear to be objects of ridicule in the lines contrasting the 'MAGISTRATES' whose 'lamps are gayly blinking' - the verb describes the manner of men rather than of inanimate objects - and the folk 'blind fu'' (ll.73-6). Light and darkness being metaphors for reason or the absence of it, the inference is that the magistrates' cunning operates more effectively than does the blind faith and optimism of the Whigs. Lastly, there is a distinctly Episcopalian literary flavour here that should not escape our attention. Fergusson recalls his sources for added poignancy: the abbreviated grace of Pitcairne's The Assembly ("Act III. Scene I", p.39); the upstart fools as masters, a symbol of the overthrow of Episcopacy and the Stewarts in Colvil's Mock Poem (p.53); the soldering of broken laws, referring to the cracked fabric of the church which cannot be repaired, as in Meston's "MOB contra MOB" (p.216).[1]

Lines 109-135 are the final scene of the election proper: ilicit, chaotic, and, in the main, painfully realistic.[2] This is a

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1. Cf. Will and Jock's quarrel with Mackenzie of Rosehaugh's comments on drunkenness. Through drink, he maintains, men are brought to 'asperse the Names of Ladies; to enter upon foolish Quarrels; and the next Morning, either to abjure what they said, or fight unjustly their comrades ...'. Essays, Works, I, 116.

2. The literati were particularly disturbed by the burgh elections. See, for example, Kames Sketches, II, 51.

blistering satire on Whig maladministration, the trumped up burgh elections, and the gross bribing of the masses.

> Glowr round the cawsey, up an' down,
> What mobbing and what plotting!
> Here politicians bribe a loun
> Against his saul for voting
> The gowd that inlakes half a crown
> Thir blades lug out to try them,
> They pouch the gowd, nor fash the town
> For weights an' scales to weigh them
> Exact that day.
>
> Then DEACONS at the counsel stent
> To get themsel's presentit:
> For towmonths twa their saul is lent,
> For the town's gude indentit:
> Lang's their debating thereanent;
> About PROTESTS they're bauthrin,
> While Sandy Fife, to mak content,
> On BELLS plays Clout the caudron
> To them that day.
>
> Ye lowns that troke in doctor's stuff,
> You'll now hae unco slaisters;
> Whan windy blaws their STAMACKS puff,
> They'll need baith pills an' plaisters;
> For tho' ev' now they look right bluff,
> Sic drinks, 'ere HILLOCKS meet,
> Will hap some Deacons in a truff,
> Inrow'd in the lang leet
> O' death yon night.

The stage is one of chaos and, the religious rhetoric urges - 'saul is lent' (1.120), death as the 'lang leet' (1.134), a coarse secularisation of the Presbyterian ethic. It is propped-up by the 'Clout the caudron' (1.125) image, alluding not so much to the comic tune of that title, but to the image in Episcopalian literature as a symbol of perennial chaos.

> He drove a kind of tinkling trade
> In clouting kirks; but then he made
> (Like's brethren of that occupation),
> A rugged sort of Reformation:
> For, like the Tinkler with the kettle,
> As oft as Knight did try his metal,
> To stop a hole, or rather hide it,
> He made a greater hole beside it;
> When he could find no hole he laid on
> Hard with his hammer, till he made one.

Thus he did clout his Kirk, and patch her,
Till all the world could not match her,
And of his work there is no ending,
For he must evermore be mending.

(Meston THE KNIGHT, pp.46-7)

CHAPTER 7

THE SUBSTITUTE LIFE IN THE CITY

A. History And The Destruction Of The Past

When the Scots humanist pondered the Whig nation that Scotland had irrevocably become after the ousting of the Stewarts, the eclipse of the traditional religions and the church hierarchy, the dissolution of the Scots parliament, the severance of old continental alliances, the change from a classical to a neo-classical culture, he saw discontinuity, an unnatural break in his nation's culture and history effected for momentary gains and an alleged utility. In his mind the Whigs built a new Scotland as they destroyed its past. Certainly this is the feeling one gets in reading the local historians of the time, like Hugo Arnot, and, indeed, it is most directly stated by at least one local Edinburgh poet, Claudero, in his many ruined building poems.

> What is my crime? Oh! what my blot?
> AULD REIKIE Cry'd, Thou'rt an old SCOT.
> What then? my Echo loud did cry,
> Must Scots antiquity now die?
> Yes, cry'd AULD REIKIE, die you must,
> For ++++++ at you has a disgust.
> My cross likewise, of old renown,
> Will next to you be tumbled down;
> And by degrees each antient place
> Will perish by this modern race.
>
> ("The ECHO of the ROYAL PORCH of the PALACE of HOLY-ROOD-HOUSE, which fell under Military Execution, Anno 1753". p.2)

> The Luckenbooths, Weigh-house, and Guard,
> By the new scheme; will not be spar'd;
> For modish people think it meet,
> That houses be swept off the street.
> Into my bowels as an urn,
> You'll all be bury'd in your turn;
> Then, phoenix-like, again you'll rise,
> And soar with me into the skies.
> Grand is the scheme, and its intent
> Is order, use, and ornament.
> My builders skill'd are in each lecture
> Of masonry and architecture;
> Can build a Cross, or pull it down,

> And from a rock extract a town;
> Can work to old taste or to new,
> Therefore the antients they out-do.
>
> ("The serious Advice and Exhortation of the Royal Exchange to the CROSS of Edinburgh, immediately before its execution", p.6)

Claudero, like any good humanist, believes a sense of history indispensable for the proper exercise of the will and, like all humanists,[1] credits it as one of the chief factors in distinguishing man from beast.

In the two or more poems about the loss of an historical sense and the inanity of living for the moment alone, Fergusson impugns Whig society in the mock heroic vein, the accustomed mode of the eighteenth century Augustan humanist satirist.[2] Scots humanist literature, as we have observed, was particularly enthralled by the kirk knight; Whig/Presbyterian society was in the humanist imagination a 'continual war' (Meston THE KNIGHT, p.53; Pitcairne BABELL, ll.1337-1351), so mock heroics, the language of battle and epic, naturally became the conventional means of aspersing the Whigs.

Fergusson's views of the modern are summed up in his "EPILOGUE ... in the Character of an EDINBURGH BUCK", which possesses some of the more important elements that make up the greater satire "KING'S BIRTH-DAY in Edinburgh". The "EPILOGUE" enumerates the worthless misadventures of the buck 'whose sole delight / Is sleep all day, and riot all the night' (ll.3-4). Here we find 'Lethe's cup' (l.1), 'lusty Bacchus' (l.7), 'Argus' eyes' (l.33), 'Phoebus' (l.38) and Helen of 'Troy' (l.52), 'Doomsday' (l.36) and 'fate' (l.41), 'war' (l.27) and 'val'rous champions ... O deed unequall'd' (ll.43-4) - all this is used in describing the bucks' flight from a City Guardsman

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1. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 44, 46; Cicero De Officiis, 13.
2. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 144, 148, 169.

before vandalising lamps on George Square (ll.13-40). The irony of the heroic language and classical reference sets off the folly of modern experience and, placed in the mouth of the buck, reveals his irreverence for, and misapprehension of, history.

> What are your far fam'd warriors to us,
> 'Bout whom historians make such mighty fuzz:
> Posterity may think it was uncommon
> That Troy should be pillag'd for a woman;
> But ours your ten years sieges will excel,
> And justly be esteem'd the nonpareil.
> Our cause is slighter than a dame's betrothing,
> For all these mighty feats have sprung from nothing.
>
> (ll.49-56)

The KING'S BIRTH-DAY in Edinburgh", a parody of the birthday ode, paints a very cynical picture of a wider cross section of contemporary society. Though not obviously so in terms of overt statement, this is another work in the Episcopal tradition of satire. The motto itself, (Oh! qualis hurly-burly fuit, si forte vidisses. Polemo-Middinia.), by Drummond of Hawthornden, foreshadows very much what amounts to a seventeenth century style satire on the perverse, ignorant and subversive rabble. The poem has some basis in fact, in the real disorders of 4th June 1773, during the celebration of his majesty's birthday;[1] nonetheless, the allusions prove it to be more a conventional, than an occasional, piece. We would expect part of the introductory section to allude to the introduction of Meston's THE KNIGHT. It does. Only time and historical distortion have blurred what was recognised by Scots humanist readers as Fergusson's frame of reference. In Meston's poem, after disparaging the empty verse of the Presbyterian champion, 'Zachariah Boyd, / And other bards of brains as void', the Aberdeen poet implores his muse,

> Inspire me now till I be tipsie,
> Not with thy Heliconian water,

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1. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, Introductory "NOTE", 260.

But liquor that will make me clatter:
For all our nicest criticks think,
Good rhime's the product of good drink.
Nor can the water of Parnassus,
With wit enliven stupid asses,
Like a full glass of forty-nine,
Which clears the wit and makes it shine,
And is found better ten to one,
Than all the springs of Helicon,
To warm the brain and clear the head,
And make a Poem run with speed.

(THE KNIGHT, pp.1-2)

Fergusson, similarly, moves from a criticism of Whiggish birthday poetry - 'There's naething in't' (l.6) - to imploring his muse,

O Muse, be kind, and dinna fash us
To flee awa' beyont Parnassus,
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,
That heath'nish spring;
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,
And gar us sing.

(ll.13-18)

Elsewhere, in form and content, the poem echoes Claudero's "On the bloody Massacre of the Dogs in Edinburgh". The mock moral tone should, of course, remind us of satires on kirk repression and the auld licht style of preaching right up to the most famous example of this kind in Scots literature, Burns's "Tam o' Shanter". Note the many exclamations and the dour tone running through the commentary on the day's events: 'O fy for shame!' (l.11), 'Oh williwins!' (l.31), 'I fear' (l.35), 'Right seldom am I gi'en to bannin, / But, by my saul' (ll.37-8), 'O soldiers! for your ain dear sakes' (l.61), 'Alake the day!' (l.70), 'I fear, I fear' (l.82). The effect is heightened by that sanctimonious 'thy' in the monologue - 'bang'd thy belly fu' (l.35), 'thy dinsome rout' (l.44), 'hear thy thunder' (l.48) - when referring irreverently to Mons Meg's cracking and, ironically, to her awesome din. And it is additionally intensified through the constraints against sexuality and the kirk's notions of 'law' (l.36) and 'crimes' (l.90).

What black mishanter gart ye spew
Baith gut and ga'?
I fear they bang'd thy belly fu'
Against the law.

(11.33-6)

And deeds that here forbids the Muse
Her theme to swell,
Or time mair precious abuse
The crimes to tell.

(11.87-90)

Lines 1-24 establish the mock epic framework, with the conventional invocation to the muse (1.13) and characteristic 'I SING' (1.1), 'Begin then' (1.19). The tone is set for irony and deflation. We are in fact told at the beginning that this is very unheroic poetry: the muse's inspiration, the bard affirms, gives rise to poetry of absolutely no value (1.6); the 'joys' (1.7) of the day are thought to be the same in Edinburgh, amidst the mob - 'fock of ilka age and name, / Baith blind and cripple!' (11.9-10), as in London. The muse, addressed as a confused wench (1.5) altogether too fond of drink (1.19), shrinks in stature as the disparity between her classical origins and her hameliness becomes more apparent; and, equally, 'Parnassus' and 'Helicon' (11.14-15) are ridiculously out of place amidst the feminine rhimes and familiar vernacular.

I SING the day sae aften sung,
Wi' which our lugs hae yearly rung,
In whase loud praise the Muse has dung
A' kind o' print;
But wow! the limmer's fairly flung;
There's naething in't.

I'm fain to think the joys the same
In London town as here at hame,
Whare fock of ilka age and name,
Baith blind and cripple,
Foregather aft, O fy for shame!
To drink and tipple.

O Muse, be kind, and dinna fash us
To flee awa' beyont Parnassus,
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,

That heath'nish spring;
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,
And gar us sing.

Begin then, dame, ye've drunk your fill,
You wouldna hae the tither gill?
You'll trust me, mair wou'd do you ill,
And ding you doitet;
Troth 'twou'd be sair agains my will
To hae the wyt o't.

(11.1-24)

Lines 25-48, beginning with the 'Sing then' convention, initiate an epic catalogue of events, delivered, incongruously, as a paltry conversation overheard in the street.

Sing then, how, on the fourth of June,
Our bells screed aff a loyal tune,
Our antient castle shoots at noon,
Wi' flag-staff buskit,
Frae which the soldier blades come down
To cock their musket.

On Willawins! MONS MEG, for you,
'Twas firing crack'd thy muckle mow;
What black mishanter gart ye spew
Baith gut and ga'?
I fear they bang'd thy belly fu'
Against the law.

Right seldom am I gi'en to bannin,
But, by my saul, ye was a cannon,
Cou'd hit a man, had he been stannin
In shire o' Fife,
Sax long Scots miles ayont Clackmannan,
And tak his life.

The hills in terror wou'd cry out,
And echo to thy dinsome rout;
The herds wou'd gather in their nowt,
That glowr'd wi' wonder,
Hafflins afraid to bide thereout
To hear thy thunder.

From the man on the street's point of view a sense of history is the appreciation of the momentary and the fleetingly irrelevant: an outlook underscored in the conflict of time and perspective as expressed in the reduction of 'antient' to a single instant at noon - 'Our antient castle shoots at noon' (1.27). That empty moment holds more

interest than does the castle's ancient history. The metaphor of illicit sexuality - 'soldier blades ... / cock their musket' (ll.29-30), 'they bang'd thy belly fu' / Against the law' (ll.35-6)[1] - again confines the historical perspective to the trifling and transient as does the ironic disparity between the poet's reactions and the concrete situations he reports. Note the misapplications: 'black mishanter' to 'spew' (l.33), 'fear' to the 'belly fu'' (l.35), 'terror' to a 'dinsome rout' (ll.43-4), 'Haflins afraid' to 'thy thunder' (ll.47-8). To imagine the cannon hitting a man, if he were standing (l.39), and 'tak his life' (l.42) is, of course, sheer buffoonery. Real historical appreciation with the attendant human emotions appropriate to it, such as fear and awe, is no part of the modern's perspective.

'Sing likewise, Muse' (l.49) ushers in lines 49-66 as the epic catalogue turns to the political champions of the town. The magistrates' past pride is compared with that of preening nonentities, the king's beggars, 'Like scar-craws new ta'en down frae woodies' (ll.49-54). But the irony bites even deeper, as we would expect, with the City Guard, upon whom Highland heroism is irretrievably lost. Accents and a caesura mark-off 'this great day' (l.55), which sets the stage for the Guard, whose military prowess is, as in "LEITH RACES", made to reside in the activities of their barber, while the rhyme 'functions-unctions' (ll.58, 60) rounds the deflationary effect. And once more we see that stinging contrast between the soldiers' (l.61) heavy weaponry and their effective power.

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1. Cf. "The Blythsome Wedding".

> ... and Bess with the lillie white Leg,
> That gat to the South for Breeding
> and bang'd up her wamb in Mons-Meg.
> (ll.36-8, Watson Choice Collection I)

On this great day the city-guard,
In military art well lear'd,
Wi' powder'd pow and shaven beard,
Sang thro' their functions,
By hostile rabble seldom spar'd
Of clarty unctions.

O soldiers! for your ain dear sakes,
For Scotland's, alias Land of Cakes,
Gie not her bairns sic deadly pakes,
Nor be sae rude,
Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix,
As spill their blude.

(11.55-66)

The last lines (67-69) are the scene of the battle, witnessing the emergence of the mock epic 'hero' (1.85) - really, the community at large - and the worthy antagonists for this lot, the 'wrath and angry phiz' of a fireworks display (11.67-8), the severe blow - 'lounder' - administered by an airborne dead cat (11.75-6).

Now round and round the serpents whiz,
Wi' hissing wrath and angry phiz;
Sometimes they catch a gentle gizz,
Alake the day!
And singe, wi' hair-devouring bizz,
Its curls away.

Shou'd th' owner patiently keek round,
To view the nature of his wound,
Dead pussie, dragled thro' the pond,
Takes him a lounder,
Which lays his honour on the ground
As flat's a flounder.

(11.67-78)

At the battle's finish we are back in the boorish world of Christis Kirk. The muse thus leaves the city for the country, where the days are not so long and boring; repudiates the substitute existence, devoid of heroic values, authentic human emotions, and worthy conflicts; and withdraws into the 'peerless' court of 'Fancy' (1.95), where a more fruitful existence can be conceived, and implicitly, something more worthy than birthday odes written.

Next day each hero tells his news
O' crackit crowns and broken brows,
And deeds that here forbid the Muse
Her theme to swell,
Or time mair precious abuse
Their crimes to tell.

She'll rather to the fields resort,
Whare music gars the day seem short,
Whare doggies play, and lambies sport
On gowany braes,
Whare peerless Fancy hads her court,
And tunes her lays.

(11.85-96)

B. False Sentiment And The Graveyard

Whiggism, in the guise of the mechanisms of progress or, more frequently, in that of sentimentalism, which treated man as a machine of natural impulse - a common animal,[1] always elicited the young poet's utmost contempt. "The SOW of FEELING", the early burlesques, "A BURLESQUE ELEGY on the amputation of a Student's Hair, before his Orders" and "The CANONGATE PLAY-HOUSE in RUINS. A BURLESQUE POEM.", are explicit examples of his contemning the eighteenth century man of feeling and his false sentiment.[2] Less explicit are the satires on the Presbyterian sentimentalist[3] which rely heavily upon the mock elegy and the stanza often associated with that form: the Habbie stanza. In a very thorough treatment of the subject, The Funeral Elegy and the Rise of English Romanticism, John Draper traces the evolution of the funeral elegy from its beginnings as a seventeenth century Episcopalian form, serious and political in nature, to its gradual modification, yet by the Episcopalians, as a satirical weapon against the Puritans and Presbyterians, who had borrowed the original form, albeit making it more macabre and sentimental, for their own purposes. Draper identifies a polarisation of the funeral elegy by the late seventeenth century into this affectedly grave Presbyterian genre and the Episcopalian parody of the same.[4] The funeral elegy in Scotland followed the same pattern of development from Royalist

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1. For comments on the two enemies of the humanist see Mackenzie of Rosehaugh Works, Essays, I, 50; Fussell Augustan Humanism, 21-2, 28.
2. Fergusson here agrees with Dr Johnson and Locke. See Locke An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 79, 430, 432.
3. On the interrelationship of Calvinism and Sentimentalism see Draper The Funeral Elegy And The Rise Of English Romanticism (London 1967), 21, 152-154, 164.
4. See Draper op. cit., 53-59, 69-70, 91-2, 111, 118, 136-38, 151-54, 274.

politics as it had in England:[1] starting with serious elegies like Bishop Patrick Forbes of Corse's Funerals (Aberdeen 1635) and reaching its high water mark in the broadside elegies of Ninian Paterson, another Episcopalian divine. Though Draper claims that the satiric elegy in Scotland seems not wholly to have been the tool of any one party,[2] it is clear that from its origins at the hands of the Royalist lairds, like Sir Robert Sempill - who were fully aware of the elegy in England -, it was most often used to parody the sanctimonious funeral elegy: works like Basil Hamilton's The Mournful Muse (1701), which dwells on the horrors of the grave, and the later poetry of Robert Blair and the graveyard school. Certainly Fergusson adopts the mock elegy form and the Habbie stanza to satirise the affected nature and the acquisitiveness of the Calvinist or the forced emotionalism of the Whig. He otherwise uses elegy unaffectedly for elegiac action,[3] just as it had been employed in the seventeenth century, or, later by Alexander Nicol, as in "An Elegy on Johnie Galla", and "An Elegy on Auld Use and Wont"; that is, as a vehicle for political propaganda. In so doing, it must be added, he was like Ruddiman and the humanist critics,[4] swimming against the whole tide of sentimental aesthetics in Scotland.

The notion that Fergusson began as a sentimentalist poet in English and later recanted his sentimentalism in his Scots verse is mistaken.[5] With the exception of a very few poetic exercises - e.g. "THE COMPLAINT. A PASTORAL", "SONG" (pp.31 and 32) - there are few

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1. Draper op cit, 221-23.
2. Draper op cit., 221.
3. Fussell Augustan Humanism, 43, 293.
4. See D. Duncan Thomas Ruddiman (Edinburgh and London 1965) 119.
5. A.H. Maclaine Robert Fergusson (New York 1965) 27-31.

'sorrows', 'gushing tears', or exclamation marks in the early poetry: far fewer than is generally accepted that there were. Satiric poetry aside, his vein is more that of a genuine melancholy retrospect as he ponders changes in his society and holds up the past in an attempt to frustrate these changes.[1] The towering city ("PASTORAL I. MORNING", ll.31-4), 'civil discord' ("PASTORAL II. NOON", ll.19-28), a decaying Britain ("On the cold Month of APRIL 1771."), are recurring themes more akin to those of Goldsmith than to those of Shenstone and the sentimental school. Furthermore the English poems in the period 1769-1771 are related to the later works in Scots and English rhetorically, through the humanist rhetoric of winter, the divine hierarchy, the society of the bees; hence with the opposing tradition to sentimentalism.

Among his first pieces were in fact burlesques of the sentimental elegy and the graveyard poem. "A BURLESQUE ELEGY on the amputation of a Student's Hair, before his Orders" is one such piece, written, M.P. McDiarmid notices,[2] in the tradition of Pope's "The Rape Of The Lock", and metrically and rhythmically parodying Gray's "Elegy". The profusion of exclamation marks and overstatements in the introduction sets the mock moral tone.

> O SAD catastrophe! O event dire!
> How shall the loss, the heavy loss be born?
> Or how the muse attune the plaintive lyre,
> To sing of Strephon with his ringlets short?
>
> (ll.1-4)

'Solemn sounds', 'sad echoes' (ll.13-14), 'bitter anguish sighs' (l.29), mourning and grief (ll.25, 30) make light of sentimentalism

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1. Raymond Williams discusses this mood in later eighteenth century poetry in The Country and The City 43, 70-73.
2. Robert Fergusson, II, Introductory "NOTE", 253.

and, with the ironic swipes at a dour kirk, of the Presbyterian elegy itself and those who must know

> Why such oppressive and such rigid laws
> Are still attendant on religious things?
>
> (11.7-8)

Another early satire on sentimentalism, but also on graveyard verse and the morbid elements of the Presbyterian elegy, is "The CANONGATE PLAY-HOUSE in RUINS. A BURLESQUE POEM". Here everyday scenes at the theatre, trivialised through narrowing the compass of King Richard and Shakespeare (11.29-50), idyllic shepherds (11.51-6), Jove and Olympus (11.60-8) to the Canongate stage, are set in the verbose sentimental/graveyard framework, beginning with 'feeling hearts' (1.1) and closing with the 'church-yard's gloom' (1.69).

> YE few whose feeling hearts are ne'er estrang'd
> From soft emotions: Ye who often wear
> The eye of pity, and oft vent her sighs,
> When sad Melpomene, in woe-fraught strains,
> Gains entrance to the breast; or often smile
> When brisk Thalia gayly trips along
> Scenes of enlivening mirth; attend my song.
> And Fancy, thou! whose over-flaming light
> Can penetrate into the dark abyss
> Of chaos, and of hell: O! with they blazing torch
> The wasteful scene illumine, that the muse,
> With daring pinions, may her flight pursue,
> Nor with timidity be known to soar,
> O'er the theatric world, to chaos chang'd.
> Can I contemplate on those dreary scenes
> Of mould'ring desolation, and forbid
> The voice elegiac and the falling tear!
>
> (11.1-17)

> Alas! how sadly alter'd is the scene!
> For lo! those sacred walls, that late were brush'd
> By rustling silks and waving capuchines,
> Are now become the sport of wrinkl'd time!
> Those walls, that late have echo'd to the voice
> Of stern King Richard, to the seat transform'd
> Of crawling spiders and detested moths,
> Who in the lonely crevices reside;
> Or gender in the beams, that have upheld
> Gods, demi-gods, and all the joyous crew
> Of thunderers in the galleries above.
>
> (11.29-39)

Ye who oft wander by the silver light
Of sister Luna, or to church-yard's gloom,
Of cypress shades, if chance should guide your steps
To this sad mansion, think not that you tread
Unconsecrated paths; for on this ground
Have holy streams been pour'd, and flow'rets strew'd;
While many a kingly diadem, I ween,
Lies useless here intomb'd, with heaps of coin
Stamp'd in theatric mint: offenceless gold!
That carried not persuasion in its hue,
To tutor mankind in their evil ways.
After a lengthen'd series of years,
When the unhallow'd spade shall discompose
This mass of earth, then relics shall be found,
Which, or for gems of worth, or Roman coins,
Well may obtrude on antiquary's eye.
Ye spouting blades! regard this ruin'd fane,
And nightly come within these naked walls,
To shed the tragic tear.

(11.68-86)

These two early satiric strains, on false sentiment and morose graveyard musing, remained with Fergusson to the end of his short career as a poet, there being later swipes at the sentimental elegy in "GOOD EATING" (11.10-52) and full-fledged satires on the entire cult of sentiment in "The SOW of FEELING" and "MUTUAL COMPLAINT of Plainstanes and Causey, in their Mother-tongue". In the latter two instances the myth of the man of feeling is shattered: the myth of that genteel figure, created by Hutcheson and the new light of Presbyterian moderate philosophers and literateurs, whose moral sense and heightened sensibilities infallibly led him to right action, and whose tears and gesticulations were the surest signs of that infallibility.[1]

The motto to "The SOW of FEELING", the "Epilogue" to Henry Mackenzie's "Prince of Tunis", tells us clearly what is to follow.

Well! I protest there's no such thing as dealing
With these starch'd poets - with these MEN of FEELING!

---

1. See the introduction to Henry Mackenzie The Man Of Feeling, edited by Brian Vickers (London 1970) ix, xii.

But beyond just ridiculing men of feeling, "The SOW" is a genuine burlesque of the Presbyterian elegy. From the mouth of a feeling sow, who laments her recently slaughtered husband, are spoken the elegiac words of a Presbyterian divine on the subjects of blighted innocence and pure love (ll.5-6, 33-40), the perversion of the laws set down in the Old Testament (ll.7-8, 72-5), luxury (ll.15-16, 76-81), and the sorrows and horrors of the grave (ll.13-14, 51-71). This is underpinned by a fine sprinkling of sentimental and pious expressions: 'pitiless oppression - cruel case!' (l.3), 'cruel hands' (l.5), 'innocence ... fled!' (l.6), 'doom'd a crime' (l.8), 'blest my longing arms' (l.9), 'love's sympathetic charms!' (l.10), 'bloody stalls' (l.14), 'load of misery ... load of woes!' (l.16), 'heavy heart' (l.17), 'tender infants' (l.33), 'flame divine' (l.34), 'No deadly, sinful passion' (l.37), 'warmest vows' (l.43), 'Happiness, a floating meteor thou' (l.49), 'gloomiest horrors (l.51), 'deep-dy'd sanguinary tide' (l.52), 'blood-distilling ear!' (l.57), 'many a briny tear!' (l.59), 'weep till sorrow shall my eye-lids drain' (l.60), 'base murd'rers' (l.63), 'mournful voice!' (l.64), 'Had melted any hearts - but hearts of stones!'(l.65), 'The blood-stain'd blade' (l.68). Lines 1-14 introduce the theme of a blasted innocence and the decline of religious law.

> MALIGNANT planets! do ye still combine
> Against this wayward, dreary life of mine!
> Has pitiless oppression - cruel case!
> Gain'd sole possession of the human race?
> By cruel hands has ev'ry virtue bled,
> And innocence from men to vultures fled!
> Thrice happy, had I liv'd in Jewish time,
> When swallowing pork or pig was doom'd a crime;
> My husband long had blest my longing arms,
> Long, long had known love's sympathetic charms!
> My children too - a little suckling race,
> With all their father growing in their face,
> From their prolific dam had ne'er been torn,
> Nor to the bloody stalls of butchers borne.

Lines 15-48 start with a summary condemnation of luxury and proceed, in the wonted humanist fashion, to the sow's reveries on sacred love, always masking, of course, her lower animal passions.

Ah! luxury! to you my being owes
Its load of misery - its load of woes!
With heavy heart, I saunter all the day,
Gruntle and murmur all my hours away!
In vain I try to summon old desire,
For favourite sports - for wallowing in the mire:
Thoughts of my husband - of my children slain,
Turn all my wonted pleasure into pain!
How oft did we, in Phoebus warming ray,
Bask on the humid softness of the clay?
Oft did his lusty head defend my tail
From the rude whispers of the angry gale;
While nose-refreshing puddles stream'd around,
And floating odours hail'd the dung-cled ground.
Near by a rustic mill's inchanting clack,
Where plenteous bushels load the peasant's back,
In straw-crown'd hovel, there to life we came,
One boar our father and one sow our dam:
While tender infants on the mother's breast,
A flame divine on either shone confest;
In riper hours love's more than ardent blaze,
Inkindled all his passion, all his praise!
No deadly, sinful passion fir'd his soul,
Virtue o'er all his actions gain'd control!
That cherub which attracts the female heart,
And makes them soonest with their beauty part,
Attracted mine: - I gave him all my love,
In the recesses of a verdant grove:
'Twas there I listn'd to his warmest vows,
Amidst the pendant melancholy boughs;
'Twas there my trusty lover shook for me
A show'r of acorns from the oaken tree;
And from the teeming earth, with joy, plough'd out
The roots salubrious with his hardy snout.

With this she waxes even more philosophical, more morbid and lachrymose.

But Happiness, a floating meteor thou,
That still inconstant art to man and sow,
Left us in gloomiest horrors to reside,
Near by the deep-dy'd sanguinary tide,
Where wetting steel prepares the butch'ring knives,
With greater ease to take the harmless lives
Of cows, and calves, and sheep, and hog, who fear
The bite of bull-dogs, that incessant tear
Their flesh, and keenly suck the blood-distilling ear!
At length the day, th' eventful day drew near,
Detested cause of many a briny tear!
I'll weep till sorrow shall my eye-lids drain,
A tender husband, and a brother slain!

Alas! the lovely languor of his eye,
When the base murd'rers bore him captive by!
His mournful voice! the music of his groans,
Had melted any hearts - but hearts of stones!
O! had some angel at that instant come,
Giv'n me four nimble fingers and a thumb,
The blood-stain'd blade I'd turn'd upon his foe,
And sudden sent him to the shades below -
Where, or Pythagoras' opinion jests,
Beasts are made butchers - butchers chang'd to beasts.

(11.49-71)

A return to the subjects of the beginning - erring man, the contravention of the old biblical laws, luxury - neatly closes the homiletic structure of the poem.

In early times the law had wise decreed;
For human food but reptiles few should bleed;
But monstrous man, still erring from the laws,
The curse of heaven on his banquet draws!
Already has he drain'd the marshes dry
For frogs, new emblems of his luxury;
And soon the toad and lizard will come home,
Pure victims to the hungry glutton's womb:
Cats, rats and mice, their destiny may mourn,
In time their carcasses on spits must turn;
They may rejoice to-day - while I resign
Life, to be number'd 'mongst the feeling swine.

(11.72-83)

The last two lines are especially biting. Through deliberate ambiguity, the sow is actually saying that she is to be numbered amongst all men of feeling, in the poet's eyes, the 'feeling swine' of society. This underlies his choosing for his persona a sow; animals, especially pigs, being low on the humanist scale of being as creatures of feeling, impulse and lowly passion: instinctive machines at best. Through the sow, Fergusson lashes out at the Presbyterian notions of predestination and the moral sense, both of which, as in Swift's Mechanical Operation Of The Spirit, deprive man of the sense and reason that elevate him above the animal kingdom.

"MUTUAL COMPLAINT of Plainstanes and Causey, in their Mother-tongue" belongs to the humanist tradition of anti-Whig legal satire,

setting out, as it does, to expose the man of feeling as a cold legalist; disparaging the Whig notion of legislating progress and improvement; and ridiculing the idea of law as a substitute life. The structure itself is built round the Whig philosophy of utility and compromise for the general good, as expressed, for example, in parts of Kames' Sketches Of The History Of Man (1774), where the subject also is highways, the weight of traffic on them, and their appropriate tolls.[1] The dialogue of legal debate between Plainstanes and Causey is a travesty of the just compromise, social betterment being in no way the end of the compromise that is struck. The simple structure falls into three divisions: the argument between Plainstanes and Causey over who suffers the greater abuse (11.21-62); the exchange of legal threats and subsequent compromise (11.63-128); the agreement to place the issue before the local debating society and final resolution, it would seem, to do nothing about it whatsoever (11.129-142).

Undoubtedly, characterisation and Whig policies are more important than structure in the work. These are indeed two egregrious Whig personalities under fire: Plainstanes, the man of feeling, and Causey, the would-be man of law. The former is a prototype of the man of feeling, an individual whose sole defence against Causey is on grounds of gentility and heightened sensibilities. He is, avowedly, a preserver of love (11.30-42), 'a weak and feckless creature ... moulded by a safter nature' (11.71-2), a man of affection (11.79-82), a protector of ladies and children and the elderly (11.88-92).

> Had sae, and lat me get a word in,
> Your back's best fitted for the burden;
> And I can eithly tell you why,
> Ye're doughtier by far than I;
> For whin-stanes, howkit frae the craigs,

1. II, 502-03, 507.

May thole the prancing feet of naigs,
Nor ever fear uncanny hotches
Frae clumsy carts or hackney-coaches,
While I, a weak and feckless creature,
Am moulded by a safter nature.
Wi' mason's chissel dighted neat,
To gar me look baith clean and feat,
I scarce can bear a sairer thump
Than comes frae sole of shoe or pump.
I grant, indeed, that, now and than,
Yield to a paten's pith I maun;
But patens, tho' they're aften plenty,
Are ay laid down wi' feet fou tenty,
And stroaks frae ladies, tho' they're teazing,
I freely maun avow are pleasing.
For what use was I made, I wonder,
It was na tamely to chap under
The weight of ilka codroch chiel,
That does my skin to targits peel;
But gin I guess aright, my trade is
To fend frae skaith the bonny ladies,
To keep the bairnies free frae harms
When airing in their nurses arms,
To be a safe and canny bield
For growing youth or drooping eild.

(11.63-92)

In the same breath he proves himself uncharitable, coldly rational and legalistic; in short, a complete hypocrite.

Take then frae me the heavy load
Of burden-bearers heavy shod,
Or, by my troth, the gude auld town shall
Hae this affair before their council.

(11.93-96)

Later Plainstanes recommends a purely utilitarian compromise, in the fashion of Hutcheson,[1] which is hardly made more palatable by the lip service he pays to aiding the poor (11.121-28).

Gin we twa cou'd be as auld-farrant
As gar the council gie a warrant,
Ilk lown rebellious to tak,
Wha walks not in the proper track,
And o' three shilling Scottish suck him;
Or in the water-hole sair douk him;
This might assist the poor's collection,
And gie baith parties satisfaction.

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1. See Moral Philosophy, II, 138-39, 142-43.

The beginning lines of his defence (11.63-70) reveal his snobbery, as do his earlier arguments against associating with the lower orders.

> Speak, was I made to dree the laidin
> Of Gallic chairman heavy treadin,
> Wha in my tender buke bore holes
> Wi' waefu' tackets i' the soals
> O' broags, whilk on my body tramp,
> And wound like death at ilka clamp.
>
> (11.43-8)

The point throughout is that the man of feeling masks his real sentiments, which are none too humane, behind a parade of emotions. There is a marked discrepancy between his soft nature and his hard legalism; his unanalysed emotional outbursts and his rational presence of mind. The man of feeling is unfeeling, intentionally so. Additionally, as that other Whig protagonist, the man of action - right feeling implied correct action - he is unable to act. A man of feeling rather than action, Plainstanes is really bent on forgetting the matter altogether.

> Content am I - But east the gate is
> The sun, wha taks his leave of Thetis,
> And comes to wauken honest fock,
> That gang to wark at sax o'clock;
> It sets us to be dumb a while,
> And let our words gie place to toil.
>
> (11.137-42)

Again we must note and underline that Fergusson is exceedingly close here to Butler's Hudibras, The First Part, "Canto III", where Hudibras waxes verbose on the subject of whether Presbyterians are beasts, and finds a handy excuse to drop the issue.

> But I shall take a fit occasion
> T' evince thee by Ratiocination,
> Some other time, in place more proper
> Then this w'are in: Therefore let's stop here,
> And rest our weary'd bones awhile,
> Already tir'd with other toile.
>
> (I, p.268)

Plainstanes, like Hudibras, is the Whig bogged down in empty words,

like 'chiels' in their 'ROBINHOOD debates' driven 'ten miles frae the question / In hand that night' ("LEITH RACES", ll.163-171).

Causey, on the other hand, the budding man of law, is an unwitting mouthpiece for destructive Whig values, misgovernment, imcompetence, and the foolhardy belief in mechanisms. It is through him that the thematic matter of the introduction develops from the very oblique satire on futile improvements (ll.1-4), the bungling puppets of state (ll.7-8), the law and its jargon (ll.15-20). Moreover, he fulfils the stereotype in humanist literature of the rising middle class cit, now able to challenge the upper classes in law; he is cast from the same dye as the Bull and Frog in Arbuthnot's The History of John Bull, ("CHAP III") adopting completely their style of rhetoric and manner of reconciling differences with opponents.

> I dinna care a single jot,
> Tho' summon'd by a shelly-coat,
> Sae leally I'll propone defences,
> As get ye flung for my expences;
> Your libel I'll impugn verbatim,
> And hae a magnum damnum datum ...
>
> (ll.97-102)

It is Causey who gives 'sentiments' (l.120) a new meaning for Plainstanes, in his threat redefining it as legal impulses -

> The deil's in't gin ye dinna sign
> Your sentiments conjunct wi' mine.
>
> (ll.119-20)

- impulses once again,[1] but not actions, as his challenges give way to the fatuous suggestion

> To bring it to the Robinhood,
> Whare we shall hae the question stated,
> And keen and crabbitly debated ... (ll.130-32)

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1. Law, like sentimentalism, was recognised as a substitute for action by the men of the Enlightenment. For example, Hutcheson states, 'CIVIL Societys substitute Actions in Law, instead of the Force allow'd in the State of Nature', An Inquiry Into The Origine of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (2nd edit., London 1726), 281.

Causey, like Plainstanes, is ineffectual. The similarity does not end here. Plainstanes treats of himself as a mechanism of feeling with a programmed sense of appropriate responses to situations. But Causey too acts and thinks as if he were devoid of reflection and reason as for example in his legal responses and Whig platitudes about social mechanisms, as with the notion that

> ... coachman never trow they're sinning,
> While down the street his wheels are spinning ...
>
> (11.57-8)

- that is, the prevalent Whig idea that every action has unforeseen effects. Similarly, he is a singularly insentient critic - like Willie in "AN ECLOGUE" - of the very cause he wishes to promote, Whig that he is. Aside from certain ironical comments about the provost and baillies (11.133-34), Causey voices the well-aired complaints of Whig maladministration and 'improvement' regarding the Royal Exchange and the removal of the centuries old Mercat Cross, removed for incommoding the street.[1]

> Tho' magistrates the Cross discard,
> It makes na whan they leave the Guard,
> A lumbersome and stinkin bigging,
> That rides the sairest on my rigging.
> Poor me owr meikle do ye blame,
> For tradesmen tramping on your wame,
> Yet a' your advocates and braw fock
> Come still to me 'twixt ane and twa clock,
> And never yet were kend to range
> At Charlie's Statue or Exchange.
>
> (11.107-16)

The solution of removing the Cross manifestly did not work; tradition was stronger than utility as crowds continued to aggregate round the

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1. See Smollett Humphry Clinker, 255; Kincaid History of Edinburgh, 153, 335-36; The Anecdotes And Egotisms Of Henry Mackenzie, edit. by Harold W. Thompson (London 1927) 55; Claudero "The Serious Advice and Exhortation of the Royal Exchange to the CROSS of Edinburgh, immediately before its execution."

area where the Cross had been.

Graveyard poetry sprang from the same roots as sentimental poetry: from the Presbyterian elegy, emotional, gloomy, and horrific, with its 'tears of blood', 'sorrows', 'wormes and slime'.[1] This poetry had, of course, been brought into popular acclaim by the poets of the graveyard school, men like Robert Blair, author of "The Grave". And, as always, and this partially explains his repudiation by the literati, it was parodied in the spirit of Colvil and Pitcairne by diehard humanists like Robert Fergusson. A parody of Blair, and even Gray,[2] is at its most vivid in the early social satire on the beaux and fops at the theatre, "The CANONGATE PLAY-HOUSE in RUINS. A BURLESQUE POEM", with its heavy trappings of the graveyard poem: 'feeling hearts' (l.1), 'soft emotions' (l.2), 'pity', 'sighs' (l.3), 'woe-fraught strains' (l.4), 'the dark abyss / Of chaos, and of hell' (ll.9-10), 'dreary scenes / Of mould'ring desolation' (ll.15-16), 'The voice elegiac and the falling tear!' (l.17), 'silver light' (l.68), 'churchyard's gloom' (l.69), 'cypress shades' (l.70), 'this sad mansion' (l.71), 'Unconsecrated paths' (l.72), 'the unhallow'd spade' (l.80), 'this ruin'd fane' (l.84), 'the tragic tear' (l.86), 'pensive sorrow' (l.90). That Fergusson's imagination continued to run counter to the Presbyterian Elegy and the graveyard poem throughout his career is evident in the later light pieces, like "ROB FERGUSSON's LAST WILL", a Hudibrastic using pompous sounding Latin legal terms and irreverent metaphors.

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1. Zacharie Boyd "An Epitaph upon the death of Robert Lord Boyd", prefixed to his Four Letters of Comfort (Edinburgh 1878). Boyd, Dean of Glasgow University, converted to Presbyterian in 1640.

2. Cf. line 86 of Fergusson's poem with Gray's "Elegy", l.53; lines 68-100 with the first 84 lines of Blair's "The Grave".

... parting breath's a sneeze
To set sensations all at ease.

(11.37-8)

As I in health with him wou'd often
This clay-built mansion wash and soften ...

(11.68-9)

It must be affirmed that his later odes, which have an element of horror in them, derive, again, from a humanist tradition which owes much to Drummond of Hawthornden, and which dwells upon mutability and the limitation of the senses.

"On James Cumming" satirises the graveyard imagination, quite incidentally, through linking it with the antiquarianism of the age. In making light of the antiquary's obsession with old things, Fergusson pokes fun at graveyard conventions through localising the exotic and placing the eternal in a momentary context. In this instance the antiquary becomes, notably, a 'knight' and his familiar grounds of research the typical setting of the graveyard poem.

Just now in fair Edina lives,
    That famous Antient Town
At a known place hight Blackfry'rs Wynd
    A knight of Odd renown

A Druids sacred form he bears
    With Saucer Eyes of Fire
An Antique Hat on's head he wears
    Like Ramsays the Town Cryer

Down in the Wynd his Mansion Stands
    All gloomy dark within
Here mangled Books like blood and Bones
    Strew'd in a Giants Den

Crude indigested half devour'd
    On groaning Shelves theyr thrown
Such Manuscripts no Eye can read
    No hand Wrote but his own

No Prophet he like Sydrophel
    Can future times explore
But what has happened he can tell
    Five hundred years and more

Butler hovers in the background here again - Sydrophel was the astrologer in Hudibras -, and the Presbyterian elegy does not elude the final banter of the last impious lines on 'Sin' (l.30), death and the solemnity of the church (ll.40-41).

> This wight th' outsides of Churches loo'd
> Almost unto a Sin
> Spires gothic of more use he prov'd
> Than Pulpits are within
>
> ---
>
> When e'er the fatal day shall come
> For come alas it must
> When this good knight must stay at home
> And turn to antique dust
>
> The solemn Dirge ye Owls prepare
> Ye Bats more hoarsly skreak
> Croak all ye Ravens Round the bier
> And all ye Church Mice Squeak

Fergusson's most effective counter to sentimentalism and the related concept of determined mechanisms were his mock elegies in the Habbie stanza, which itself recalls its seventeenth century usage against the Presbytery and thus constitutes an integral part of the meaning of the poem. One of his very first literary efforts was probably composed during his first year at university: the "ELEGY, On the Death of Mr. DAVID GREGORY, late Professor of Mathematics in the University of St. Andrews.". It possesses elements of the tradition passed down from Robert Sempill's "Epitaph On Sanny Briggs", which are visible in phrases like 'Without remeid' (l.4) and, more especially, in the tone of mock horror, tearful sentiment, irreverence of death and the resurrection.

> NOW mourn, ye college masters a'!
> And frae your ein a tear lat fa',
> Fam'd Gregory death has taen awa'
> Without remeid;
> The skaith ye've met wi's nae that sma',
> Sin Gregorys dead.
>
> (ll.1-6)

Great 'casions hae we a' to weep,
An' cleed our skins in mourning deep,
For Gregory death will fairly keep
To take his nap;
He'll till the resurrection sleep
As sound's a tap.

(11.37-42)

Fergusson's contempt of mathematics was a strictly orthodox humanist distaste for reducing men to statistical laws and disbelief, as the politico mathematicians of the time would have it, in controlling fate through calculations. Gregory is, therefore, cut down to size as something less than a flesh and blood hero; as a geometrical 'hector' (1.29), no doubt harried by the Achilles of his own miscalculations. His mathematical powers, ability to 'divine' the obvious (11.15-17), and his awesome knowledge, despite which, death takes the hindmost part, make him a Hudibrastic figure of uncommon banter.

He could, by Euclid, prove lang sine
A gangin point compos'd a line;
By numbers too he cou'd divine,
Whan he did read,
That three times three just made up nine;
But now he's dead.

In Algebra weel skill'd he was,
An' kent fu' well proportion's laws;
He cou'd make clear baith B's and A's
Wi' his lang head;
Rin owr surd roots, but cracks or flaws;
But now he's dead.

Weel vers'd was he in architecture,
An' kent the nature o' the sector,
Upon baith globes he weel cou'd lecture,
An' gar's tak heid;
Of geometry he was the hector;
But now he's dead.

(11.13-30)

He was in Logick a great Critick,
Profoundly skill'd in Analytick.

He'd undertake to prove by force
Of Argument, a Man's no Horse.

In Mathematicks he was greater
Then Tycho Brahe or Erra Pater:
For he by Geometrick scale
Could take the size of Pots of Ale;
Resolve by Sines and Tangents straight,
If Bread or Butter wanted weight;
And wisely tell what hour o' th' day
The Clock does strike, by Algebra.

(Hudibras, The First Part, "Canto I, pp. 6, 10)

"ELEGY on JOHN HOGG, late Porter to the University of ST. ANDREWS" is yet a more striking example of humanist satire on the Presbyterian elegy and Presbyterian values. It is a mock elegy on one of those greedy Puritanical merchants, so common to seventeenth century humanist literature and prominent in "HALLOW-FAIR" and "LEITH RACES", and, generally, a satire on religious hypocrisy.

Lines 1-30 convey us, with the couthy village intimacy of eaves-droppers, before an irreverently familiar meeting with death, where the eternal becomes the commonplace or absurd, and an exaggerated fit of mourning; they open with a loose conversational address to 'DEATH', in feminine rhymes, and with the imagery of 'wicket' and 'log' (11.5-6), more suggestive of a winter's wood-chapping at a cottar's house than of entering St Peter's gates.

DEATH, what's ado? the de'il be licket,
Or wi' your stang, you ne'er had pricket,
Or our AULD ALMA MATER tricket
O' poor John Hogg,
And trail'd him ben thro' your mark wicket
As dead's a log.

Now ilka glaikit scholar lown
May dander wae wi' duddy gown;
KATE KENNEDY to dowy crune
May mourn and clink,
And steeples o' Saint Andrew's town
To yird may sink.

(11.1-12)

The passing taunt at the learned, 'ilka glaikit scholar lown' (1.7), leads naturally into mock praise of the rigours of Presbyterian

education under 'Pauly Tam' (1.13), Thomas Tullidelph, Principal of the Varsity, and, more pertinently, former Professor of Divinity at St Mary's College and Moderator of the General Assembly of the Kirk: a man noted for strict discipline. Pauly Tam represents the more dour side of Presbyterianism, with his 'canker'd snout' (1.13), his grave laws requiring the students to wear black (1.15), his 'common schools' for discipline and moral reflection (1.19), and his formidable railing (1.28). It is noteworthy that the use of the same informal address puts 'Pauly Tam' or 'auld Tam' (11.13, 20) on an equal footing with 'DEATH' and that, rhetorically, he is equated with an insect, 'Like ony emmack' (1.22).

> Sin' Pauly Tam, wi' canker'd snout,
> First held students in about
> To wear their claes as black as soot,
> They ne'er had reason,
> Till death John's haffit ga'e a clout
> Sae out o' season.
>
> Whan regents met at common schools,
> He taught auld Tam to hale the dules,
> And eidant to row right the bowls
> Like ony emmack;
> He kept us a' within the rules
> Strict academic.
>
> Heh! wha will tell the students now
> To meet the Pauly check for chow,
> Whan he, like frightsome wirrikow,
> Had wont to rail,
> And set our stamacks in a low,
> Or we turn'd tail.
>
> (11.13-30)

Lines 31-60 shift the attention to John as he was; carrying out his duties as porter like a lay preacher of the Auld Licht variety; threatening hell and damnation and citing biblical saws. We see him as a total caricature of the Auld Licht minister: a knight of the kirk; a cit too well versed in the language of the law (1.33); a gloatingly proud spouter of scriptures (11.39-42, 55-60); an

overzealous lay minister outdoing the dominies and preachers in admonishing students against their evil ways (ll.43-8); an ignorant, unimaginative fundamentalist (ll.49-58); an avid debater, like Causey, more interested in the 'contesting' than in the substance of a given issue (ll.59-60).

> Ah, Johnny! aften did I grumble
> Frae cozy bed fu' ear' to tumble;
> Whan art and part I'd been in some ill,
> Troth I was sweer,
> His words they brodit like a wumill
> Frae ear to ear.
>
> Whan I had been fu' laith to rise,
> John than begude to moralize:
> "The TITHER NAP, the sluggard cries,
> "And turns him round;
> "Sae spake auld Solomon the wise
> "Divine profound!"
>
> Nae dominie, or wise mess John,
> Was better lear'd in Solomon;
> He cited proverbs one by one
> Ilk vice to tame;
> He gar'd ilk sinner sigh an' groan,
> And fear hell's flame.
>
> "I hae nae meikle skill, quo' he,
> "In what you ca' philosophy;
> "It tells that baith the earth and sea
> "Rin round about;
> Either the Bible tells a lie,
> "Or you're a' out.
>
> "Its i' the psalms o' DAVID writ,
> "That this wide warld ne'er shou'd flit,
> "But on the waters coshly sit
> "Fu' steeve and lasting;
> "An' was na he a head o' wit
> "At sic contesting!"
>
> (ll.31-60)

Above all, John was a business-man, a 'bien body', as one contemporary described him:[1] in the poem, another one of those Puritanical merchants whose religion was money.

---

1. See McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, Introductory "NOTE", 304.

For John ay lo'ed to turn the pence,
Thought poortith was a great offence ... (11.79-80)

After a few lines on 'Johnny's lodge' (1.62), where the students were wont to drink as long as there was 'siller on us' (1.64), the poem concludes with a mock morale on the virtues of making money (11.73-96). The satire is most caustic in the biblical language in which John's secular, business existence is described, and in the metaphysical vindication of his money making practises.

Wi' haffit locks, sae smooth and sleek,
John look'd like ony antient Greek;
He was a Nazarene a' the week,
And doughtna tell out
A bawbee Scots to straik his cheek
Till Sunday fell out.

For John ay lo'ed to turn the pence,
Thought poortith was a great offence:
"What recks tho' ye ken mood and tense
"A hungry weyme
"For GOWD wad wi' them baith dispense
"At ony time.

"Ye ken what ails maun ay befal
"The chiel that will be prodigal;
"Whan wasted to the very spaul
"He turns his tusk,
"For want o' comfort to his saul
"O' hungry husk."

(11.73-90)

Waxing moralistic in tone himself while, ironically, extolling money-grubbing, in the vein of John Hogg, the poet finally exhorts the students to follow in the footsteps of John and his 'canny' (1.95) widow.

Ye royit lowns! just do as he'd do;
For mony braw green SHAW and MEADOW
He's left to cheer his dowy widow,
His winsome Kate,
That to him prov'd a canny she-dow,
Baith ear' and late.

(11.91-6)

"To the TRON-KIRK BELL" is not one of the mock elegies but

should be grouped with them as a satire, also in the Habbie stanza, on determinist mechanisms and the Presbytery. The title is in fact not what it suggests; the poet is not writing "To", or eulogising, "the TRON-KIRK BELL" so much as directing his flyting to the same; actually, decrying changes in the town after the fashion of Juvenal's "Third Satire", the basis of so many humanist town satires by D'Urfey, Gay, Swift, Fergusson and others.

> Here want of rest a' nights more people kills
> Than all the college, and the weekly bills;
> Where none have privilege to sleep, but those
> Whose purses can compound for their repose.
> In vain I go to bed, or close my eyes,
> Methinks the place the middle region is,
> Where I lie down in storms, in thunder rise;
> The restless bells such din in steeples keep,
> That scarce the dead can in their churchyards sleep ...
>
> (Oldham, p.199)[1]

Moreover, the Tron Kirk was not just any bell. The Tron itself was a symbol of the Presbyterian ascendancy, the edifice having been built in 1647 and completed in 1673, as a classic piece of post-Reformation architecture. But no doubt seventeenth and eighteenth century humanists compared it to what the reformers had destroyed, and remarked, as does a twentieth century humanist, on its amateurish spire and, generally, on the decline of church architecture in Scotland after the Reformation.[2] The Tron had other associations as well for the eighteenth century humanists, for during temporary occupation by Jacobites in 1745 Reverend Neil M'Vicar had the audacity to pray for a heavenly, as opposed to an earthly, crown for Bonnie Prince Charlie.[3] At the time of the satire's publication John Drysdale

1. Poems Of John Oldham, edit. by Bonamy Dobrée (London 1960).
2. See Agnes Mure Mackenzie A Historical Survey Of Scottish Literature To 1714 (London 1933) 149.
3. See Rev. D. Butler The Tron Kirk of Edinburgh (Edinburgh and London 1906) 167.

was the Tron's minister. A friend and staunch disciple of William Robertson in Presbyterian affairs, he was, in the following year, 1773, himself Moderator of the General Assembly.

The Tron Kirk, then, was a bastion, and, in Fergusson's own mind, a symbol of Presbyterian moderate culture; especially of moderate beliefs regarding determinism and the inevitability of progress, which the poet depicts as a rationale for controlling the masses and serving the self-interests of the moderates. It was expedient for them to hold, 'Whatever is, is right'.

Throughout the first half of the poem (ll.1-36) the speaker himself proves to be one of the manipulated, making observations and criticising the political system without realising what he is uttering; drawing connections which are suppressed from the desensitised consciousness of the town dweller. In the introductory lines he is punch-drunk with the bell's noise - effectively evoked by the 'thing - ring - hing -sel' - bring - hell' (ll.1-6) rhymes - and cannot fathom what end it serves.

> WAnwordy, crazy, dinsome thing,
> As e'er was fram'd to jow or ring,
> What gar'd them sic in steeple hing
> They ken themsel',
> But weel wat I they couldna bring
> War sounds frae hell.
>
> What de'il are ye? that I shud ban,
> Your neither kin to pat nor pan;
> Not uly pig, nor master-cann
> But weel may gie
> Mair pleasure to the ear o' man
> Than stroak o' thee.
>
> Fleece merchants may look bald, I trow,
> Sin a' Auld Reikie's childer now,
> Maun stap their lugs wi' teats o' woo,
> They sound to bang,
> And keep it frae gawn thro' and thro'
> Wi' jarrin twang.
>
> (ll.1-18)

The extent of his bewilderment is conveyed in his humanising and flyting with the inanimate bell, rather than with the politicians behind it, and in his providing more information to the reader than he is actually aware of. He mentions the bell 'was fram'd' (l.2) and refers to 'them' (l.3) and 'They' (ll.4-5) while indirectly satirising their utilitarian notions - for the bell is useless (ll.7 -9) - and the well-known economic principle that the creation of one mechanism creates a demand for others;[1] his playful assertion is, of course, that the bell's noise will generate a desire for wool ear plugs, a particularly germane comment as the wool industry was thought by the Whigs to have contributed the most to luxury.[2]

Lines 19-36 shift the attention to the townsman's mental battle with the bell for peace of mind in his home. The bell is personified as a nagging wife responsible for leaving her husband in a senseless state.

> Your noisy tongue, there's nae abideint,
> Like scaulding wife's, there is nae guideint:
> Whan I'm 'bout ony bus'ness eident,
> It's sair to thole;
> To deave me, than, ye tak a pride in't
> Wi' senseless knoll.
>
> (ll.19-24)

In agonising over his one-sided communication with the bell, he intimates who is accountable for the disturbance; who ultimately is beyond the reach of hearing his protests.

> O! war I provost o' the town,
> I swear by a' the pow'rs aboon,
> I'd bring ye wi' a reesle down;
> Nor shud you think
> (Sae sair I'd crack and clour your crown)
> Again to clink.
>
> (ll.25-30)

---

1. For example, Steuart Considerations On Lanark, 284.
2. Millar Historical View, 490.

Still bedazed and unaware of what he has said, the town dweller stops his flyting to mull over a recent dream, linking the kirk with the Whig administration in insidiously restricting the awareness of, and cowing the masses in order to control them. The passage is neatly handled. In two stanzas (11.37-48) the poet makes an explicit accusation against the kirk while, through the rhetoric of its more fanatical sects, representing the long held humanist picture of Presbyterian preaching, and the old Hudibrastic association of the kirk minister - his frightening 'Oratory' - and the 'Devil' (e.g. Hudibras, Third Part, "Canto I, p.88). The lines read like a footnote to what the Victorian historian, H.T. Buckle, accused the seventeenth century kirk of perpetrating.

> They (kirk ministers) kept the people in a worse than Egyptian bondage, inasmuch as they enslaved the mind as well as body ...
>
> Of all the means of intimidation employed by the Scotch clergy, none was more efficacious than the doctrines they propounded respecting evil spirits and future punishment. On these subjects, they constantly uttered the most appalling threats. The language, which they used, was calculated to madden men with fear, and to drive them to the depths of despair ... And, what made it more effectual was, that it completely harmonized with those other gloomy and ascetic notions which the clergy inculcated, and according to which, pleasures being regarded as sinful, sufferings were regarded as religious.
>
> It was generally believed, that the world was overrun by evil spirits, who not only went up and down the earth, but also lived in the air, and whose business it was to tempt and hurt mankind .... At their head was Satan himself, whose delight it was to appear in person, ensnaring or terrifying every one he met ... His strategems were endless. For, in the opinion of the divines, his cunning increased with his age ....[1]

I dreamt ae night I saw Auld Nick;
Quo he, "this bell o' mine's a trick,
"A wylie piece o' politic,
"A cunnin snare
"To trap fock in a cloven stick,
"'Ere they're aware.

---

1. On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect, 194-6.

"As lang's my dautit bell hings there,
"A' body at the kirk will skair;
"Quo they, gif he that preaches there
"Like it can wound,
"We douna care a single hair,
"For joyfu' sound."

(11.37-48)

By the closing lines (11.49-60) the town dweller's own submerged awareness, which has logically reinforced his assertions regarding a benighted populace, comes to the fore, and he is able to recognise that the magistrates and baillies are to blame for his disturbance.[1] Like the magistrates of "The ELECTION", so complacently indifferent to the 'blind fu' (11.73-6) of the town, the magistrates leave the townsmen to their own devices by legislating for them at a safe distance.

If magistrates wi' me wud 'gree,
For ay tongue-tackit shud you be,
Nor fleg wi' antimelody
Sic honest fock,
Whase lugs were never made to dree
Thy doolfu' shock.

But far frae thee the bailies dwell,
Or they wud scunner at your knell,
Gie the foul thief his riven bell,
And than, I trow,
The by-word hads, "the de'il himsel'
"Has got his due."

(11.49-60)

The satire closes significantly on notes of 'antimelody' and 'doolfu' shock' (11.51, 54), the high points of the persistent bell's jarring twang which prevents communication: in simple humanist terms, with noise, as in "HALLOW-FAIR", one of the hallmarks of the city of chaos. Relative to humanist architectural ideals, the Tron did not serve civilisation - societal harmony - affording neither shelter nor peace of mind. It was, rather, a symbol of its absence.

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1. Fergusson's indictment against the magistrates was substantiated by the literati. See Arnot History of Edinburgh, 382; Hutcheson Moral Philosophy, II, 262-63.

"The GHAISTS: A Kirk-yard Eclogue." stands as a bridge between the mock elegies or graveyard pieces and the unsentimental humanist elegies. It both both burlesques the graveyard elegy and genuinely laments the passing of Scots traditions, advocating, in the humanist vein, elegiac action. In "The GHAISTS" Fergusson is most unashamedly and staunchly the Scots Tory, the Jacobite and nationalist; and is most openly anti-England, Hanover, Whig and Presbyterian. The very lines subscribed to the title leave this in no doubt.

> Did you not say, on good ANN's day,
> And vow and did protest, Sir,
> That when HANOVER should come o'er,
> We surely should be blest, Sir?
>
> An auld Sang made new again.

It is the political message that the dialogue is designed to put across. The poem is, in an immediate sense, a piece against the Mortmain Bill, which threatened the charitable trusts of Heriot's and Watson's schools for the sons of poor burgesses and merchants, and is, more generally, a piece of Scots Tory propaganda.

Technically speaking, two things occur in lines 1-78. There is, firstly, the burlesque of the conventional setting and horrors of the graveyard. Second, the pastoral device is employed, as in "HALLOW-FAIR" and "LEITH RACES", to contrast the two Scotlands, past and present. The two techniques complement one another. In lines 1-18 the setting is replete with 'dowy murmurs' (l.1), 'the cald, clad grave' (l.2), 'ghaists, sae grizly and sae wan' (l.5), 'lanely tombs' (l.6), 'douff discourse' (l.6), 'mirkest hour' (l.9), 'Bogles and spectres' (l.10), 'hidden cairns' (l.11) 'hamlocks wild, and sun-burnt fearns' (l.12), 'dern mansions of the midnight tomb' (l.14), 'the black hours' (l.18): in short, with the earmarks of the Presbyterian elegy and graveyard poem. The satire resides in the turgidity

of the passage and, equally, in the localisation of the description: the silly intrusion of Geordie Girdwood, the late sexton, and the particularised image of the evil spirits 'Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns' (l.11), flouting the ghostly atmosphere as did 'DEATH' in "ELEGY on JOHN HOGG" (ll.5-6).

> WHARE the braid planes in dowy murmurs wave
> Their antient taps out o'er the cald, clad grave,
> Whare Geordie Girdwood, mony a lang-spun day,
> Houkit for gentlest banes the humblest clay,
> Twa sheeted ghaists, sae grizly and sae wan,
> 'Mang lanely tombs their douff discourse began.
>
> WATSON
>
> Cauld blaws the nippin north wi' angry sough,
> And showers his hailstanes frae the Castle Cleugh
> O'er the Greyfriars, whare, at mirkest hour,
> Bogles and spectres wont to tak their tour,
> Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns,
> Amang the hamlocks wild, and sun-burnt fearns,
> But nane the night save you and I hae come,
> Frae the dern mansions of the midnight tomb,
> Now whan the dawning's near, whan cock maun craw,
> And wi' his angry bougil gar's withdraw,
> Ayont the kirk we'll stap, and there tak bield,
> While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

Heriot goes on to relate the false literary setting of the Presbyterian elegy, the Scotland in which he awakens, to a changed 'NATURE' (l.25), and, in so doing, introduces the pastoral device, implying that modern Scotland is not - and stating that Scotland under the Stewarts and Episcopacy indeed was - the natural ideal. When recounting the unnatural changes of these new physical surroundings (ll.19-28) - in terms reminiscent of "AN ECLOGUE" (ll.51-5) - he uses the language of the graveyard poem (e.g. 'owlets round the craigs ... And bludey bawks' - ll.27-8); immediately afterwards, his remarks, despite the exclamations, cease to be so morbid and stilted, and are obviously intended as a genuine lament. In humanist rhetorical terms, Heriot's outpourings follow the formula: 'JAMIE' (l.32) (Scotland under the

Stewarts) = nature = civilisation or, rhetorically, shelter ('stately turrets' - 1.36), growth, a natural covering (his statue brawly 'busk(ed) wi' flow'rs ilk coming year' - 1.40). And conversely: Whiggism = anti-nature = barbarity, the destruction of shelter ('tow'rs are sunk' - 1.41), security and growth ('lands are barren now, / ... flow'rs maun dow' - 11.41-2).

HERRIOT

I'm well content; but binna cassen down,
Nor trow the cock will ca' ye hame o'er soon,
For tho' the eastern lift betakens day,
Changing her rokelay black for mantle grey,
Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting rings,
Nor sheds the caller moisture frae his wings.
NATURE has chang'd her course; the birds o'day
Dosin' in silence on the bending spray,
While owlets round the craigs at noon-tide flee,
And bludey bawks sit singand on the tree.
Ah, CALEDON! the land I yence held dear,
Sair mane mak I for they destruction near;
And thou, EDINA! anes my dear abode,
Whan royal JAMIE sway'd the sovereign rod,
In thae blest days, weel did I think bestow'd,
To blaw thy poortith by wi' heaps o' gowd;
To mak thee sonsy seem wi' mony a gift,
And gar they stately turrets speel the lift:
In vain did Danish Jones, wi' gimcrack pains,
In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes:
In vain did he affix my statue here,
Brawly to busk wi' flow'rs ilk coming year;
My tow'rs are sunk, my lands are barren now,
My fame, my honour, like my flow'rs maun dow.

(11.19-42)

Watson's response does little more than keep the dialogue moving while adulterating the graveyard tone with the mention of local wizards and superstitions and the hamely farm images of 'corbie fleeing'' and 'crouping' craws' (1.51).

Sure Major Weir, or some sic warlock wight,
Has flung beguilin' glamer o'er your sight;
Or else some kittle cantrup thrown, I ween,
Has bound in mirlygoes my ain twa ein,
If ever aught frae sense cou'd be believed
(And seenil hae my senses been deceiv'd),
This moment, o'er the tap of Adam's tomb,
Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome:

Nae corbie fleein' there, nor croupin' craws,
Seem to forspeak the ruin of thy haws,
But a' your tow'rs in wonted order stand,
Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

(ll.43-54)

Again using the pastoral scheme, lines 55-114 broach the issue of the Mortmain Bill, which was to virtually deprive the two schools of their endowments. Herriot relates not only the Mortmain Bill but the 1707 Union to the new capitalist lairds and the demise of the former pastoral state of the nation. In the passage England is the repressive landlord; Scotland the dispossessed tenantry. The Union is said to have brought 'destructive ills' (l.59), and Scotland is depicted as full of servile trustees who carry out the demands of their laird, England, paying 'gowd in gowpins as a grassum gift' (l.66): the fee paid to the landlord by the new tenant. England, as the cruel masters who 'Yoke hard the poor' (l.71), reminds us of the 'Gentles' for whose delicacies

... they hight their tenants rent,
And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent ...

("A DRINK ECLOGUE", ll.65-6)

and of the starving farmers under the whip of the absentee lairds ("The RISING of the SESSION", ll.25-48).

Think na I vent my well-a-day in vain,
Kent ye the cause, ye sure wad join my mane,
Black be the day that e'er to England's ground
Scotland was eikit by the UNION's bond;
For mony a menzie of destructive ills
The country now maun brook frae mortmain bills,
That void our test'ments, and can freely gie
Sic will and scoup to the ordain'd trustee,
That he may tir our stateliest riggins bare,
Nor acres, houses, woods, nor fishins spare,
Till he can lend the stoitering state a lift
Wi' gowd in gowpins as a grassum gift;
In lieu of whilk, we maun be weel content
To tyne the capital at three per cent.
A doughty sum indeed, whan now-a-days
They raise provisions as the stents they raise,
Yoke hard the poor, and lat the rich chiels be,

Pamper'd at ease by ither's industry.
  Hale interest for my fund can scantly now
Cleed a' my callants backs, and stap their mou'.
How maun their weyms wi' sairest hunger slack,
Their duds in targets flaff upo' their back,
Whan they are doom'd to keep a lasting Lent,
Starving for England's weel at three per cent.

(11.55-78)

Note too those images of barbarity, those 'stateliest riggins bare' and devastated 'acres, houses, woods ... fishins' (11.63-4). Watson continues the metaphor in an eighteenth century moral vein, claiming that Edinburgh in the past - 'the gowden times' (1.79) - embodied ideal moral values and social responsibility. Under the present Whig administration vice prevails: moral values are inverted to serve, ironically, 'a back-gaun king' (1.84); 'honesty and poortith baith are crimes' (1.80); a Hanoverian king connives at 'vice' and never frets over the 'price o' sin' (11.85-89), crushing the 'pious' among the poor with 'ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws' (11.91-4); reducing the state to barbarity, the rule of animals.

WATSON

  AULD REIKIE than may bless the gowden times,
Whan honesty and poortith baith are crimes;
She little kend, whan you and I endow'd
Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers gude,
That e'er our siller or our lands shou'd bring
A gude bien living to a back-gaun king,
Wha, thanks to ministry! is grown sae wise,
He douna chew the bitter cud of vice;
For gin, frae Castlehill to Netherbow,
Wad honest houses baudy-houses grow,
The crown was never spier the price o' sin,
Nor hinder younkers to the de'il to rin;
But gif some mortal grien for pious fame,
And leave the poor man's pray'r to sane his name,
His geer maun a' be scatter'd by the claws
O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.
Yet, shou'd I think, altho' the bill tak place,
The council winna lack sae meikle grace
As lat our heritage at wanworth gang,
Or the succeeding generations wrang
o' braw bien maintenance and walth o' lear,
Whilk else had drappit to their children's skair;

For mony a deep, and mony a rare engyne
Ha'e sprung frae Herriot's wark, and sprung frae mine.

(11.79-102)

With Herriot's rejoinder, England, the unnatural, the barbaric, the bestial, becomes the court, and Scotland the country, sold by bribery. But there is another telling image superimposed upon this one. The humanist always rejects the idea of forces compelling society to a course of action; individuals either act freely, choose to deny their own will, or are limited in their decision making by coercion, especially by enforced poverty or hunger. Thus Herriot uses the metaphor of England as the fishermen who 'need only bait the line' (l.109); the trustees as feckless creatures who snap at 'the prevailing flee, the gowden coin' (l.110); and the flagging nation as 'sport' (l.113), men whose limited will make them an easy catch.

HERRIOT

I find, my friend, that ye but little ken,
There's einow on the earth a set o' men,
Wha, if they get their private pouches lin'd,
Gie na a winnelstrae for a' mankind;
They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,
To gar the weigh-bauk turn a single hair.
The government need only bait the line
Wi' the prevailing flee, the gowden coin,
Then our executors, and wise trustees,
Will sell them fish in forbidden seas,
Upo' their dwining country girn in sport,
Laugh in their sleeve, and get a place at court.

(11.103-114)

The poem closes (11.115-134), notably, with that recurrent winter image, emblem of Whig hegemony, and with the antidote to Whig domination. Watson, who first awakened to 'the nippin north wi' angry sough' and 'showers' of 'hailstanes' (11.7-8) threatens to see the Whig reversals of nature to their ultimate end, should the bribery Herriot deprecates persist.

WATSON

'Ere that day come, I'll 'mang our spirits pick
Some ghaist that trokes and conjures wi' Auld Nick,
To gar the wind wi' rougher rumbles blaw,
And weightier thuds than ever mortal saw:
Fire-flaught and hail, wi' tenfald fury's fires,
Shall lay yird-laigh Edina's airy spires:
Tweed shall rin rowtin' down his banks out o'er,
Till Scotland's out o' reach o' England's pow'r;
Upo' the briny Borean jaws to float,
And mourn in dowy saughs her dowy lot.

(11.115-124)

Herriot's final solution to the nation's problems constitutes one of Fergusson's most explicit assertions of the Scots humanist position, for the Mackenzie to whom they are about to appeal for help was a staunch Episcopalian and Royalist. As M.P. McDiarmid rightly notices, he was known by Presbyterians as the 'Bluidy Advocate' for his prosecution of the Covenanters; as the opponent of Charles II's proposal to unite the two kingdoms; and as the author of The Defence of the Antiquity of the Royal Line of Scotland (1685).[1] Moreover, Mackenzie represented the spirit of the early Vernacular Revival in his scholarship - he founded the Advocate's Library -, his defence of Scottish traditions, legal, social, linguistic and literary, and in his religious and political opinions. That founding father of the Revival, Watson, published Mackenzie's Works (1716-20), and it was notably to him that Freebairn, Pitcairne, the Ruddimans, the Fraser-Tytlers, Meston, Fergusson and their circle naturally turned for inspiration. He was one of the last defenders of their cause. Herriot's answer to Whiggism would not have sat so easily on Ramsay's tongue.

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1. Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 125", 288. This is one of the points that I raise in my review of Billy Kay's "Fergusson's Auld Reikie". See F.W. Freeman "Fergusson's unfortunate and damaging champion", T.E.S.S. (17th April 1981) 19.

HERRIOT

Yonder's the tomb of wise Mackenzie fam'd,
Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd,
Freed the hail land frae covenanting fools,
Wha erst ha'e fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools;
Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our pows,
And than, whan she her ebon chariot rows,
We'll travel to the vaut wi' stealing stap,
And wauk Mackenzie frae his quiet nap:
Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wonted skill,
May fleg the schemers o' the mortmain-bill.

(ll.125-134)

The image of waking 'Mackenzie frae his quiet nap' (l.132), of describing death in this off-hand manner, makes a fitting closure to this burlesque of the graveyard poem.

C. The Elegiac Mode - Destruction of the Past

The impulse to compose mock elegies and burlesques of the graveyard remained with the poet to the end of his short career; nevertheless, as a seasoned humanist artist, he could, and did, turn his hand to serious elegiac verse; not the stilted sentimental drivel of the mid-eighteenth century. There was for one thing an on-going tradition of elegiac satire and elegiac verse, which Fergusson inherited, thematically founded on the decline of Scotland's towns and the erosion of Scottish culture. Dunbar himself, the father of the 'local poem' or city poem 'in English',[1] had written "The Devillis Inquest", "Tydingis frae the Sessioun" - published in popular eighteenth century collections like Ramsay's Ever Green and Hailes' Bannatyne Poems - and "To the Merchantis of Edinburgh". These were satires in the Juvenalian vein. Then there were the seventeenth century Latinist poets: John Johnston, whose town poems, included in Camden's Britannia,[2] and Arthur Johnston, whose Epigrams (upon the City of Aberdeen)[3] adopted the elegiac mood, at times, in pondering the rise and fall of Scotland's towns.

> Two stately forts the realm's old guardians stood,
> The first great walls of royal builders prov'd.
> Their lofty turrets on the shores were shown,
> One to the rising, one the setting sun.
> All round, well stock'd with fish, fair rivers lay,
> And one presents a safe and easie bay.
> Such once it was; but now a nameless place,
> Where Princes lodg'd, the meanest cattel graze.
> T' other survives, and faintly breaths as yet,
> But must e're long submit to conqu'ring fate.
> Where's haughty Carthage now with all her power?
> Where's Rome; and Troy that rul'd as great before?
> Where the vast riches of the Asian shore?

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1. This is the considered opinion of Robert Aubin in Topographical Poetry In XVIII - Century England (repr. of 1936, New York 1966) 14; and William Irving in John Gay's London (Cambridge, U.S.A. 1928) 357.
2. English translation by Edmund Gibson (London 1695).
3. English translation by I.B. (Aberdeen 1685).

> No wonder then that we frail men should die,
> When towns themselves confess mortality.
>
> (J. Johnston "Innerness and Innerlochy")

This mood appealed to the humanists of the post-Union period; it spoke to their hearts. In 1741, for example, appeared the anonymous "Lamentation For E_NA in Thraldom", taking the form of Oldham and Dryden's translations of Juvenal's "Third Satire", but bewailing the now politically emasculated capital city.

> Once famed Metropolis! wretched is thy Doom,
> In abject Ruines sunk, and ruthless Gloom:
> Senate's meer Shadow, but without a Soul,
> What can thy swift, approaching Fate controul?

Fergusson's friends and contemporaries published elegiac verse and satire that influenced him a good deal: works like Dougal Graham's "Turnimspike"; Mercer's "Arthur's Seat",[1] lamenting 'many a ruin'd port' (p.16) on the once prosperous Fife coast and 'the wheel of ceaseless change' (p.36), crushing empires beneath it; and Claudero's many Edinburgh ruin poems. The keynote of these works was Scotland rebuilding itself at the expense of its past; Scotland changing for the sake of utility or mere modishness, and without a sense of continuity or benefit from the lessons of history.

Fergusson's elegiac verse falls into two categories: those works in which fashion, mainly clothing, is a metaphor for regrettable social changes, and those quite generally about the ebbing culture. The fashion metaphor is an important one in humanist poetry. As Paul Fussell correctly notices, 'To the Augustan humanist, clothes, like buildings, are static, public, social, completely controllable ...;[2]

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1. Mercer cites John Johnston's influence several times in his "Notes" to the poem. POEMS. BY The Author of the Sentimental Sailor. (Edinburgh 1774).

2. Augustan Humanism, 222.

they are symbols of conventions and institutions, as with Swift's use of the torn coat poorly repaired as a symbol of Episcopacy's replacement in Scotland by the Presbytery, and the subsequent impoverishment of the ousted clergy.[1] Clothes distinguish man from other similar species, thus the humanist insists that one should neither, as Fussell has it, oversymbolise, mistaking clothing for the wearer, nor undersymbolise, conceiving of the individual as distinct from his clothing.[2] By his definition the town fop is as uncivilised as the savage. More often than not Fergusson's characters are guilty of oversymbolising, like Swift's corrupt sect who worship tailors and conceive of man as a 'Micro-Coat, or rather a compleat Suit of Cloaths with all its Trimmings' (A Tale of a Tub, 78). The poet upholds the ancient humanist imperative:

> ... let all finery not suitable to a man's
> dignity be kept off his person ...[3]

The idea of fashion in Fergusson's poetry is part of a systematic, interlocked network of imagery: another segment of the rhetorical formula used in "The Ghaists": Nature (the pastoral state) = Appropriate Clothing (proper symbolising) = Time-worn institutions and conventions = Shelter (protection) = Adaptability to Seasons = Civilisation; Art (counterpastoral) = Fashion (oversymbolising/ undersymbolising) = Changing values and institutions = Destruction (Winter rules) = Bestiality and Barbarism. This, we may recall, was the central tension in "On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET", where the natural laird, simply clad, represents old loyalties and harmonious living as against the fop, the laird turned politician,

1. Tale of a Tub, 138-39.
2. Augustan Humanism, 212-13.
3. Cicero De Officiis, 133.

traitor to his tenants, unable to weather life's storms.

> For they war' never made to dree
> The adverse gloom o' FORTUNE's eie ... (11.35-6)

The poet's own "FASHION. A POEM", though by no means one of his better efforts, makes just such rhetorical distinctions as we have been discussing. In it we find 'Nature', as she appears in "LEITH RACES", cloaking 'ilka rigg o' corn' (11.1-3), the parent and protector; figuratively the shelter to those who depend upon her - 'O Nature, parent goddess!' (1.1); Nature as pastoral in her 'bright form! in thy effulgence pure' (1.4); Nature, obviously imagined in a 'simple garb' as in "HAME CONTENT" (1.102), 'regardless of vain fashion's fools' (1.7), accompanying 'Wisdom in sober contemplation clad' (1.10); Nature in a simple dress superior to the finest Art, reflecting physical and spiritual wellbeing.

> Nature! to thee alone, not Fashion's pomp,
> Does beauty owe her all-commanding eye.
> From the green bosom of the wat'ry main,
> Array'd by thee, majestic Venus rose,
> With waving ringlets carelessly diffus'd,
> Floating luxurious o'er the restless surge.
> What Rubens then, with his enliv'ning hand,
> Could paint the bright vermillion of her cheek,
> Pure as the roseat portal of the east,
> That opens to receive the cheering ray
> Of Phoebus beaming from the orient sky?
> For sterling beauty needs no faint essays,
> Or colourings of art, to gild her more:
> She is all perfect. And, if beauty fail,
> Where are those ornaments, those rich attires
> Which can reflect a lustre on that face,
> Where she with light innate disdains to shine?
>
> (11.51-67)

We must add that Fashion (Art) as 'foreign weeds' (1.79) is portrayed as something of an Orange or Hanoverian figure, especially if, in our reading, we bear in mind that the motto of the poem is again from Butler.

> Bred up where discipline most rare is,
> In Military Garden Paris.
>
> (Hudibras)

In fact throughout the poem the language of the Royalist propagandists is effectively brought to bear in depicting the rise of fashion and consequent overthrow of old values: 'vain fashion's fools' (l.7) loom large as the rebellious mob - 'those vile enormities of shape / That croud the world' (l.9), 'those bold usurpers' (l.11); while 'FASHION her empire holds ... amidst the Millenarian train / On a resplendent throne exalted high' (ll.14-16). In relation to the Nature - Art tension, fashion's empire, like Hanover's in "The Ghaists", is a treacherous force against wellbeing: her

> ... dear bought treasures o'er their native isle
> Contagious spread, infect the wholesome air
> That cherish'd vigour in Britannia's sons.
>
> (ll.21-3)

She is destined to wreak havoc and to make of the Eden of the past a barren, putrefying waste.

> By pride, by luxury, what fatal ills
> Unheeded have approach'd thy mortal frame!
> How many foreign weeds their heads have rear'd
> In thy fair garden? Hasten 'ere their strength
> And baneful vegetation taint the soil,
> To root out rank disease, which soon must spread,
> If no bless'd antidote will purge away
> Fashion's proud minions from our sea-girt isle.
>
> (ll.77-84)

"To my AULD BREEKS" is an apt example of the poet's grappling with the question of clothes as a proper symbol as he sees in his auld breeks - very much a protean image - a reflection of the human condition. In lines 7-16 the irreparable breeks symbolise the frailty of the poor and oppressed, 'the Writers and the Bardies' (l.4), in their futile struggle to subsist and, given the intrusions of that persistent winter image, to remain civilised.

Still making tight wi' tither steek,
The tither hole, the tither eik,
To bang the birr o' winter's anger,
And had the hurdies out o' langer.
  Siclike some weary wight will fill
His kyte wi' DROGS frae doctor's BILL,
Thinking to tack the tither year
To life, and look baith haill an' fier,
Till at the lang-run death dirks in,
To birze his saul ayont his skin.

(ll.7-16)

With lines 17-46 the breeks remind the poet of disloyalty, born of greed, and of his own conflict in overcoming the duality of his own personality,[1] the need to discriminate between his duty to himself and to others.

  You neena wag your DUDS o' clouts,
Nor fa' into your dorty pouts,
To think that erst you've hain'd my TAIL
Frae WIND and WEET, frae SNAW and HAIL,
And for reward, whan bald and hummil,
Frae garret high to dree a tumble.
For you I car'd, as lang's ye dow'd
Be lin'd wi' siller or wi' gowd:
Now to befriend, it wad be folly,
Your raggit hide an' pouches holey;
For wha but kens a poet's placks
Get mony weary flaws an' cracks,
And canna thole to hae them tint,
As he sae seenil sees the mint?
Yet round the warld keek and see,
That ithers fare as ill as thee;
For weel we lo'e the chiel we think
Can get us tick or gie us drink,
Till o' his purse we've seen the bottom,
Then we despise, and ha'e forgot him.

  Yet gratefu' hearts, to make amends,
Will ay be sorry for their friends,
And I for thee - As mony a time
Wi' you I've speel'd the braes o' rime,
Whare for the time the Muse ne'er cares
For siller, or sic guilefu' wares,
Wi' whilk we drumly grow, and crabbit,
Dowr, capernoited, thrawin gabbit,
And brither, sister, friend and fae,
Without remeid of kindred, slay.

---

1. This conflict is central to the humanist way of thinking. See Fussell Augustan Humanism, 279, 282.

The symbol appears again, coupled with another image of winter's power, with relation to the poet's vulnerability and the demands of necessity, though equally to the folly of paying too much heed to fashion. Neither the destitute poet nor the stylish macaroni can defend himself against adversity; but clearly the latter, like the butterfly, consciously forfeits his will to control his own fate, in so far as he can.

> You've seen me round the bickers reel
> Wi' heart as hale as temper'd steel,
> And face sae apen, free and blyth,
> Nor thought that sorrow there cou'd kyth;
> But the niest mament this was lost,
> Like gowan in December's frost.
>
> Cou'd Prick-the-louse but be sae handy
> To make the breeks and claise to stand ay,
> Thro' thick and thin wi' you I'd dash on,
> Nor mind the folly of the fashion:
> But, hegh! the times' vicissitudo,
> Gars ither breeks decay as you do.
> Thae MACARONIS, braw and windy,
> Maun fail -Sic transit gloria mundi!
>
> (11.47-60)

Oversymbolising is the error cautioned against in the lines on the macaronis, as it is again in lines 61-68, where the breeks masking a lover's flaws illustrate the blindness of mistaking clothes for the individual.

> Now speed you to some madam's chaumer,
> That butt an' ben rings dule an' claumer,
> Ask her, in kindness, if she seeks
> In hidling ways to wear the breeks?
> Safe may you dwall, tho' mould and motty,
> Beneath the veil o' under coatie,
> For this mair faults nor yours can screen
> Frae lover's quickest sense, his ein.

Hence the closing lines aim at a balance in man's understanding his relationship to his clothing and the meaning of them as a symbol; properly viewed, the breeks, without undersymbolising or oversymbolising, remind the individual of what he is, or once was.

Of if some bard, in lucky times,
Shou'd profit meikle by his rhimes,
And pace awa', wi' smirky face,
In siller or in gowden lace,
Glowr in his face, like spectre gaunt,
Remind him o' his former want,
To cow his daffin and his pleasure,
And gar him live within the measure.

So PHILIP, it is said, who wou'd ring
O'er Macedon a just and gude king,
Fearing that power might plume his feather,
And bid him stretch beyond the tether,
Ilk morning to his lug wad ca'
A tiny servant o' his ha',
To tell him to improve his span,
For PHILIP was, like him, a MAN.

(11.69-84)

"BRAID CLAITH" shows the poet's talents to better advantage. It is a compact and poignant little elegiac satire - a piece that satirises the changes which it deplores - probably derived from Claudero's "The History of a Norland Barber", an unctuous barber who 'forgot his former station' (p.29). More generally, it derives from Fergusson's reading of humanist philosophy, Horace's philosophical pieces, like "Epode 4", or from Mackenzie of Rosehaugh's Essays pleading against false finery,

> ... fine Cloaths, nor those gaudy
> Trappings, which are no Part of us, and
> consequently cannot be the Standard by
> which we are to be measured.[1]

Through its reliance upon animal rhetoric, the introductory lines (1-18) make the simple assertion that 'merit' (1.3) and worth (1.15) are no longer the measure of a man; that since society recognises only outward finery men are but pretty beasts. The man of the day is ironically exhorted, like a sick farm animal, to 'hap ye weel, baith back and wame' (1.5); to cover 'his four quarters' (1.17); and, like a painted tortoise, to be 'bienly clad wi' shell fu' braw'

1. Works, I, 145.

(l.11) in 'gude Braid Claith' (l.12). Moreover, the rhythm and tone of the passage, through the skilful placement of long vowel sounds (e.g. 'YE - fain - hae- name/Wrote - fame/nae - pretension - claim/wreath/weel - baith wame/gude Braid Claith', ll.1-6) creates an air of mock gravity in the exhortation, bespeaking self-importance and self-deception in the persons to whom it is directed. The hard k sounds express the contempt of the haves for the have-nots (ll.13-18).

YE wha are fain to hae your name
  Wrote in the bonny book of fame,
Let merit nae pretension claim
  To laurel'd wreath,
But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,
  In gude Braid Claith.

He that some ells o' this may fa,
An' slae-black hat on pow like snaw,
Bids bauld to bear the gree awa',
  Wi' a' this graith,
Whan bienly clad wi' shell fu' braw
  O' gude Braid Claith.

Waesuck for him wha has na fek o't!
For he's a gowk they're sure to geck at,
A chiel that ne'er will be respekit
  While he draws breath,
Till his four quarters are bedeckit
  Wi' gude Braid Claith.

Lines 19-42 follow quite logically in exemplifying the general statements that the well clothed carry off the prize while all others are scorned. As in "To my AULD BREEKS" here is the issue of prudentia in the sharp contrast of appearance and reality: in the barber who would have folk believe that he is of a higher station in life, but who, in the subtle s, th and ht sketch of his activities, is exposed as a pretensious scraper of whisker and smoother of hair: an unctuous upstart.

On Sabbath-days the barber spark,
Whan he has done wi' scrapin wark,

Wi' siller broachie in his sark,
Gangs trigly, faith!
Or to the Meadow, or the Park,
In gude Braid Claith.

Weel might ye trow, to see them there,
That they to shave your haffits bare,
Or curl an' sleek a pickle hair,
Wou'd be right laith,
Whan pacing wi' a gawsy air
In gude Braid Claith.

(11.19-30)

And the suitor who must 'sheath / His body in a scabbard clean' (11.34-5) is yet another image, like the lad in the 'shell' (1.11), of an unprotective covering, a non-shelter - unlike functional clothing for natural adaptation to one's physical surroundings - which removes the individual from genuine or natural relationships with people.

If ony mettl'd stirrah green
For favour frae a lady's ein,
He maunna care for being seen
Before he sheath
His body in a scabbard clean
O' gude Braid Claith.

For, gin he come wi' coat thread-bare,
A feg for him she winna care,
But crook her bonny mou' fu' sair,
And scald him baith.
Wooers shou'd ay their travel spare
Without Braid Claith.

(11.31-42)

With lines 43-54 Fergusson returns to the insect imagery of "On seeing a BUTTERFLY in the STREET" where the fops in braid claith are 'Flees braw by art, tho' worms by nature ("On seeing a BUTTERFLY", 1.6); here 'kail-worms' transformed into 'butter-flies' (1.44) and, in any case, something less than men, as they, like the barber, attempt to live beyond their natural station. The irony of the two lines in the penultimate stanza is keen -

In short, you may be what you please
Wi' gude Braid Claith. (11.47-8)

- the point being that the men of the day may be anything they please except what they essentially are; as he goes on to say, a Newton or a Shakespeare would be unacceptable in the present age were he not properly attired.

> For thof ye had as wise a snout on
> As Shakespeare or Sir Issac Newton,
> Your judgement fouk wou'd hae a doubt on,
> I'll tak my aith,
> Till they cou'd see ye wi' a suit on
> O' gude Braid Claith.
>
> (11.49-54)

There are several elements in "BRAID CLAITH" which ground it firmly to the humanist tradition: the mock gravity of the introduction and use, throughout, of the Habbie stanza; the animal and insect rhetoric so typical of anti-Presbyterian satire; the barbers trying to appear what they are not 'On Sabbath-days' (1.19), and related assumption that true religion is like simple clothing, 'very plain with little or no Ornament' (Swift Tale of Tub, 81); the assumed Whig/Presbyterian disregard for genuine learning and scholarship.

Fergusson's other pieces in the elegiac strain, and the elegies themselves, concentrate on the receding culture. Of the former group is the satire "To the PRINCIPAL and PROFESSORS of the University of St. ANDREWS, On their superb treat to Dr SAMUEL JOHNSON", and parts of "An EXPEDITION to FIFE and the Island of MAY" and "The BUGS". The satire on Johnson is elegiac in that it mourns the national disgrace of Scotland, and subsequent loss of national price, in the wake of a strong anti-Scottish campaign begun during Lord Bute's, a Scottish prime minister's, administration.

Fergusson's disdain for Samuel Johnson and, equally, for the regents of St Andrews University who welcome him, is, in good Augustan

fashion,[1] conveyed through making food - the food prepared for Johnson - a moral issue. Like the landlady in "A DRINK ECLOGUE", he deplores the advent of anti-Scots upstarts, the people who cater to them, and the delicacies bought for them from afar, which threaten to change the staple diet of the nation, and its values in the process.

> Ah! willawins, for Scotland now,
> Whan she maun stap ilk birky's mow
> Wi' eistacks, grown as 'tware in pet
> In foreign land, or green-house het,
> When cog o' brose an' cutty spoon
> Is a' our cottar childer's boon,
> Wha thro' the week, till Sunday's speal,
> Toil for pease-clods an' gude lang kail.
> Devall then, Sirs, and never send
> For daintiths to regale a friend,
> Or, like a torch at baith ends burning,
> Your house'll soon grow mirk and mourning.
>
> (11.71-82)

Another grievance which the poet bemoans, despite his avowed intention of assuaging the ill-will between himself and the citizens of Fife, is adverted to in lines 83-98: his malevolence towards the country for its Covenanting activities in the seventeenth century, and, as Thomas Ruddiman notes, the 'misunderstanding he had with a Gentleman, a native of Dunfermline, who took amiss at the concluding reflection in the Expedition to Fife so much, that he sent him a challenge; but which our Author treated with great contempt'.[2]

> What's this I hear some cynic say?
> Robin, ye loun! it's nae fair play;
> Is there nae ither subject rife
> To clap your thumb upon but Fife?
> Gi'e o'er, young man, you'll meet your corning,
> Than caption war, or charge o' horning;
> Some canker'd surly sour-mow'd carline
> Bred near the abbey o' Dumfarline,
> Your shoulders yet may gi'e lounder,

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1. See for example Hutcheson Reflections Upon Laughter And Remarks Upon the Fable of the Bees (Glasgow 1750) 46.

2. Quoted in McDiarmid Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 83-98", 301.

An' be of verse the mal-confounder.
  Come on ye blades! but 'ere ye tulzie,
Or hack our flesh wi' sword or gulzie,
Ne'er shaw your teeth, nor look like stink,
Nor o'er an empty bicker blink:
What weets the wizen an' the wyme,
Will mend your prose and heal my rhyme.

Bearing this in mind, recalling that Fergusson bitingly satirises a ruinous St Andrews University at the beginning, which had been purged several times of its Jacobites and Episcopalians; noting those very significant passing references to the arch seventeenth century Scots humanist, 'Drummond, lang syne, o' Hawthornden, / The wyliest an' best o' men' (11.61-2) and to his Polemo-Middinia; we may read into the poem something of a lament for a lost Episcopal and Stewart past. Certainly this is what the poet has in mind in "An EXPEDITION to FIFE and the Island of MAY" when his misgivings on time and decay lead to the following lines. M.P. McDiarmid states, in fact, that Fergusson 'has chiefly in mind the enthusiasm of the country for the Covenant in the reign of Charles I., and the murder of Archbishop Sharp by men of Fife on Magus Muir in 1679'; and that, 'In such lines the poet voices not only the Episcopalian tradition of the North-East, from which his family came, but also his own Deistical opinions'.[1]

  To FIFE we steer, of all beneath the sun
The most unhallow'd 'midst the SCOTIAN plains!
And here, sad emblem of deceitful times!
Hath sad hypocrisy her standard borne.
Mirth knows no residence, but ghastly fear
Stands trembling and appall'd at airy sights.
ONCE, only only once! Reward it, O ye powers!
Did HOSPITALITY, with open face,
And winning smile, cheer the deserted sight,
That else had languish'd for the blest return
Of beauteous day, to dissipate the clouds
Of endless night, and superstition wild,
That constant hover o'er the dark abode.

(11.107-119)

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1. Robert Fergusson, II, "NOTE 107-110", 300.

Parabolically, "The BUGS" bewails the undoing of old Edinburgh in a counterpastoral vision. 'The rude ax ... / Of daring innovation' (ll.29-30) razes the umbrageous forests of the 'DRYADS' (l.21), destroying the 'shade' of 'Pan' and 'his rural train' (ll.21-26). Edinburgh, 'Edina's walls' (l.21), 'Edina's mansions' (l.33), her once 'spacious' and 'gay' streets, (l.37), is portrayed as a moribund civilisation through the rhetoric of counterpastoral: the devastation of the forest, the intrusion of black night and disease, the end of summer; most fundamentally, the removal of shelter.

> Of old the DRYADS near Edina's walls
> Their mansions rear'd, and groves unnumber'd rose
> Of branching oak, spread beech, and lofty pine,
> Under whose shade, to shun the noontide blaze,
> Did Pan resort, with all his rural train
> Of shepherds and of nymphs. - The Dryads pleas'd,
> Would hail their sports, and summon echo's voice,
> To send her greetings thro' the waving woods;
> But the rude ax, long brandish'd by the hand
> Of daring innovation, shav'd the lawns;
> Then not a thicket or a copse remain'd
> To sigh in concert with the breeze of eve.
> Edina's mansions with lignarian art
> Were pil'd and fronted. - Like an ARK she seem'd
> To lie on mountain's top, with shapes replete,
> Clean and unclean, that daily wander o'er
> Her streets, that once were spacious, once were gay.
> To JOVE the Dryads pray'd, nor pray'd in vain,
> For vengeance on her sons. - At midnight drear
> Black show'rs descend, and teeming myriads rise
> of BUGS abhorrent, who by instinct steal
> Thro' the diseased and corrosive pores
> Of sapless trees, that late in forest stood
> With all the majesty of summer crown'd.
>
> (ll.21-44)

Of paramount importance is the grieving over the moral meagreness of the new town cit. Engaging in battle with the bugs, the upholsterer and the housemaid are cut down in stature - and we must note the swipe at sentimentalism - in exactly the same manner as were the burghers of "The ELECTION", who 'fleg awa the vermin' from their coats (ll.28-36). The underlying assumption is that men are now equal to bugs.

Ev'n so befalls it to this creeping race,
This envy'd commonwealth - For they a while
On Cloe's bosom, alabaster fair,
May steal ambrosial bliss - or may regale
On the rich viands of luxurious blood,
Delighted and suffic'd. But mark the end:
Lo! WHITSUNTIDE appears with gloomy train
Of growing desolation. - First UPHOLSTERER rude
Removes the waving drapery, where, for years,
A thriving colony of old and young
Had hid their numbers from the prying day;
Anon they fall, and gladly would retire
To safer ambush, but his merciless foot,
Ah, cruel pressure! cracks their vital springs,
And with their deep-dy'd scarlet smears the floor.
Sweet pow'rs! has pity in the female breast
No tender residence - no lov'd abode?
To urge from murd'rous deed th' avenging hand
Of angry house-maid - She'll have blood for blood!
For lo! the boiling streams from copper tube,
Hot as her rage, sweep myriads to death.
Their carcases are destin'd to the urn
Of some chaste Naiad, that gives birth to floods,
Whose fragrant virtues hail Edina, fam'd
For yellow limpid - Whose chaste name the Muse
Thinks too exalted to retail in song.

(11.92-117)

"ELEGY, On the Death of SCOTS MUSIC" - music in the wider sense of music and poetry - is one of the historicist works on a declining Scottish way of life and art, and its replacement by adopted English or Italian styles. Fergusson's elegy is obviously modelled on Nicol's "An ELEGY on Auld USE and WONT" (Rural Muse) and is not, then, as one scholar has it, the first example after Ramsay 'of the use of the six-line stanza in a poem of serious intent'.[1] Nicol's elegy is fraught with themes familiar to much of Fergusson's poetry, and particularly to "ELEGY, On ... SCOTS MUSIC": themes on the pernicious changes in 'church and state' (p.12); the loss of 'A race of kings ... / Twa thousand years' old, and of 'baith parliament and king' (p.13); 'peers and gentrie (once) content / To bide at hame and spend their rent', 'Landlords (who) didnae grudge to see / Their tenants thrive'

1. Maclaine Robert Fergusson, 36.

(p.13); 'nae foreign wines nor tea' (p.14); 'poets too that cou'd mak lines' (p.14); 'browsters (who) made good nappie ale, / And sald it cheaper a good dale' (p.15); oppressive 'taxes on our ale and maut' (p.15); the rescinding of 'ancient rights and liberties' (p.15); the banning of 'ane auld gun' or 'rusty blade' for defence (p.15). Aside from its being a serious elegy composed in the Habbie stanza, Nicol's "ELEGY on Auld USE and WONT" bears a striking resemblance to Fergusson's poem in singling out fashion too as a symbol of cultural erosion.

A farmer ween'd himself fu bra',
When he had plaiden hose like sna',
A good gray hodden coat, and a
Gray plaid aboon,
Warm mittens on his hands, and twa
Strong pointed shoon:

But now ilk chiel that wins a fee,
Maun hae bra blues; and wha but he?
Wi' buckles at's neck, feet and knee,
Well scour'd and clean,
As new coach harness use to be;
He looks nae mean.
Our lairds and lords, yea e'en our king,
For garb sought never ony thing
But what our ain land forth did bring;
Ladies at a'
For foreign segrims didnae fling
Their gou'd awa'.

Our native garb aside is laid,
The ancient tartan coat and plaid;
Nane o' them a'dares now be had
Sin' Wont's awa;
Poor Scotland now maun a' be sway'd
By English law.

(pp.13-15)

And both poems address themselves once to the nation itself: Nicol in the first line of his first stanza - 'OH Scotland, Scotland!', and Fergusson in the first line of his last stanza - 'O SCOTLAND!'.

This said, Fergusson's is a far more sophisticated composition which ingeniously sets in opposition different poetic forms to underpin

his structure. In lines 1-18 the "ELEGY" begins with a straightforward Scots pastoral, equating older, simple fashions with traditional music and, implicitly, with an ideal civilisation; and gives way to the stylised form of the English neoclassical pastoral elegy: the 'feather'd choir' (l.7), 'weeping streams and Naiads' (l.15), etc.

ON Scotia's plains, in days of yore,
When lads and lasses tartan wore,
Saft Music rang on ilka shore,
In hamely weid;
But harmony is now no more,
And music dead.

Round her the feather'd choir would wing,
Sae bonnily she wont to sing,
And sleely wake the sleeping string,
Their sang to lead,
Sweet as the zephyrs of the spring;
But now she's dead.

Mourn ilka nymph and ilka swain,
Ilk sunny hill and dowie glen;
Let weeping streams and Naiads drain
Their fountain head;
Let echo swell the dolefu' strain,
Since music's dead.

The effect is not only to make the Scots past, devoid of superfluities and extravagant dress, the true measure of nature and civilisation, but, even more, to equate the vernacular Scots pastoral form with Nature and the English neoclassical form with Art. Taking the point a step further; if language, as the humanist Pope puts it, is the 'dress of thought' then this overdone neoclassical verse, like gaudy dress or over-ornate Baroque architecture, is improperly attired, and reflects a low standard of civilisation.

Lines 19-48 follow a similar thesis - antithesis pattern, where the first corresponds to the Scots pastoral elegy form and the second, this time, to a different form altogether: to the Scots mock elegy which, with its conscious over-emoting, recalls the earlier English sentimental elegy lines - the 'weeping streams' (l.15) and the like -

in order to deflate them. A great deal appears in the thesis. There is firstly a Ramsayesque lament for pastoral song followed by several supportive allusions to vernacular poetry and song: allusions to Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd, Hamilton of Bangour's "The Braes Of Yarrow", Robert Crawford's "Tweed-Side": in short, allusions to a pastoral tradition seen as departing along with an old communal, bucolic way of life.

> Whan the saft vernal breezes ca'
> The grey-hair'd Winter's fogs awa',
> Naebody than is heard to blaw,
> Near hill or mead,
> On chaunter, or on aiten straw,
> Since music's dead.
>
> Nae lasses now, on simmer days,
> Will lilt at bleaching of their claes;
> Nae herds on Yarrow's bonny braes,
> Or banks of Tweed,
> Delight to chant their hameil lays,
> Since music's dead.
>
> (11.19-30)

The lines that follow are pregnant with suggestion.

> At glomin now the bagpipe's dumb,
> Whan weary owsen hameward come;
> Sae sweetly as it wont to bum,
> And Pibrachs skreed;
> We never hear its warlike hum;
> For music's dead.
>
> (11.31-36)

The bagpipes, pibrochs, and the pipes 'warlike hum' (1.35), like the mention of tartan before, conjure up Jacobites and the spirit of the '15 and the '45, while, in drawing together the pipes' muteness and the flagging military spirit[1] with outdated farming methods - 'weary

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1. The loss of the military spirit was a popular issue of the day especially among the Enlightenment figures. See for example Kames Sketches, II, 3, 9-10; Kettler Adam Ferguson, "NOTE 11", 100-101; More generally speaking, 'the burden of the past' was both a major social issue of the day and a common literary theme. See Walter J. Bate The Burden of the Past and the English Poet (London 1971) 80, 104-05.

owsen' (1.32) - which were forced out by the new capitalist lairds, the poet looks nostalgically back upon a Highland culture antedating the two late rebellions: though, of course, he does so less explicitly than had Nicol in his "ELEGY". The lines on Macgibbon are more an excuse to interpose the Standard Habbie mock elegy form for reductive effect than to celebrate the noted fiddler, classical composer - who actually composed in the Italian style - and Scots tune collector.

> Macgibbon's gane: Ah! waes my heart!
> The man in music maist expert,
> Wha cou'd sweet melody impart,
> And tune the reed,
> Wi' sic a slee and pawky art;
> But now he's dead,
>
> Ilk carline now may grunt and grane,
> Ilk bonny lassie make great mane,
> Since he's awa', I trow there's nane
> Can fill his stead;
> The blythest sangster on the plain!
> Alake, he's dead!
>
> (11.37-48)

Moving logically from the pattern of sections I and II, the final lines (49-66) posit an explicit apology of Scots national poetry and music with an implicit denunciation of English neoclassical verse.

> Now foreign sonnets bear the gree,
> And crabbit queer variety
> Of sound fresh sprung frae Italy,
> A bastard breed!
> Unlike that saft-tongu'd melody
> Which now lies dead.
>
> Cou'd lav'rocks at the dawning day,
> Cou' linties chirming frae the spray,
> Or todling burns that smoothly play
> O'er gowden bed,
> Compare wi' Birks of Indermay?
> But now they're dead.
>
> O SCOTLAND! that cou'd yence afford
> To bang the pith of Roman sword,
> Winna your sons, wi' joint accor,
> To battle speed?
> And fight till MUSIC be restor'd,
> Which now lies dead.

The cliché language and imagery of lines 55-60 - 'dawning day', 'the spray', 'smoothly play', 'gowden bed' - express false sentiment; hence, counterpastoral, a state in which false feelings and empty pastoral rhetoric mask nature. In this case art does not mirror nature; it obscures it. Nor is the neoclassical pastoral subtle like the Scots pastoral was, which could 'sleely wake the sleeping string' (l.9); 'cou'd sweet melody impart, / And tune the reed, / Wi' sic a slee and pawky art' (ll.39-41). The closing lines, reminding Scotland of her once glorious defeat of the Romans, recapitulate the subject of the waning military spirit, now lost with the moderns' mercenary pursuits. Apropos of this, the word 'afford' (l.61) possesses a touch of irony: now that Scotland has wealth she cannot 'afford' to defend her identity. Ancient simplicity and superfluities, as the literati stated repeatedly, could not co-exist. Fergusson's asseveration of the historicist position over commercial interest, which is couched in military terms, couples a hard pastoral - independent, fighting - Scotland with the preservation of her musical traditions. Again we see that the pastoral condition is always, with Fergusson, joined with vernacular traditions.

"THE DAFT-DAYS", publishes 2nd January 1772, reveals unusual sublety and poetic craftsmanship for so young a poet. A seasonal piece in the classical tradition of Epicurean withdrawal it is. But the seasonal framework has a particular relevance to the struggle of the Scottish humanist for civilisation and culture, his two inseparable objectives.

In lines 1-18 two aspects of nature during the Christmas season in the country are illustrated.

NOW mirk December's dowie face
  Glours our the rigs wi' sour grimace,
While, thro' his minimum of space,
  The bleer-ey'd sun,
Wi' blinkin light and stealing pace,
  His race doth run.

From naked groves nae birdie sings,
To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings,
The breeze nae od'rous flavour brings
  From Borean cave,
And dwyning nature droops her wings,
  Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean
Frae snawy hill or barren plain,
Whan Winter, 'midst his nipping train,
  Wi' frozen spear,
Sends drift owr a' his bleak domain,
  And guides the weir.

As the prevailing power of 'winter' (l.15), nature is a fierce chieftain: a primitive warrior ''midst his nipping train, / Wi' frozen spear', lording over his 'bleak domain', determining his own fate in war (ll.15-18).[1] Simultaneously, nature exhibits the opposite qualities as the powerless victim fleeing for his own survival; the sun runs his race in hiding, with a 'stealing pace' confined to a 'minimum of space' (ll.3-6); nature's hopeless 'wings' droop impotently in a state of sad decay (l.11). Moreover, the unmitigated personification of the passage brings home the two aspects of nature to man. Imperial December, the warrior, 'Glours' with a 'dowie face' and 'sour grimace' (ll.1-2); appears with 'visage grave' (l.12). The sun, like a snow-blind Antarctic explorer, 'bleer-eyed', nervously 'blinking', paces cautiously to safety (ll.4-6). Here then are two pictures of natural man - hardly the sentimentalist's noble savage -, living like a savage out of doors, without shelter, warmth, or civilisation: the one a picture of a ruthless barbarian fighting with his fellow man in

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1. Cf. Swift's image of 'bleak Winter with her sullen Train'. "Carbery Rocks in the County of Cork, Ireland", l.25, I.

survival-of-the-fittest circumstances, and the other, of an unadaptable victim of his environment.

Lines 19-42 transport us from the bleak outdoors into the age-old festivities of the old town, which, in humanist terms, is a fortification - the last line of defence -against winter's rage.

> Auld Reikie! thou'rt the canty hole,
> A bield for mony caldrife soul,
> Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,
> Baith warm and couth;
> While round they gar the bicker roll
> To weet their mouth.
>
> When merry Yule-day comes, I trow
> You'll scantlins find a hungry mou;
> Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fou
> O' gusty gear,
> And kickshaws, strangers to our view,
> Sin Fairn-year.
>
> Ye browster wives, now busk ye bra,
> And fling your sorrows far awa';
> Then come and gies the tither blaw
> Of reaming ale,
> Mair precious than the well of Spa,
> Our hearts to heal.
>
> Then, tho' at odds wi' a' the warl',
> Amang oursells we'll never quarrel;
> Tho' Discord gie a canker'd snarl
> To spoil our glee,
> As lang's there's pith into the barrel
> We'll drink and 'gree.

Indoors we find a mirror image of the outdoor conflict in the opposition of determinist forces, now formidable, and humanist ideals, as vital and as natural to survival as protection from winter's cold. Fergusson, in attempting to combat modernity, goes back to first principles, describing his ideal city, his recepticle of civilisation, in the starkest of terms. He is like the social historian Lewis Mumford who discerns

> ... in the rites of the cave the social and religious impulses that conspired to draw men finally into cities, where all the original feelings of awe, reverence, pride, and joy would be further magnified by art, and multiplied by the number of responsive participants.[1]

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1. The City in History, 16.

The poet's 'canty hole' (l.19) brings to mind the cave to which the first civilised men sought shelter, and it, being the proper refuge for a 'caldrife soul' (l.20), is Auld Reikie, symbol of traditional Scotland; a magnification of the Scots rural cottage, with a snug 'ingle', 'Baith warm and couth', plenty of heart warming drink in celebration of the Yule festivities (ll.21-24). The smoke of Auld Reikie becomes, in this image, that welcoming 'smeek' - with all that it implies - that saluted the gudeman in "The FARMER's INGLE" (l.13). Outside the ambit of the cottage, beyond the confines of Auld Reikie and its Christmas celebrations, are the perilous conditions of winter which introduced the poem. 'Discord('s) canker'd snarl' (l.39), reminiscent of December's 'sour grimace' (l.2), and the phrase 'tho' at odds wi' a' the warl'' (ll.37-39) signal a state of war; 'caldrife soul' (l.20), 'sorrows' (l.32), 'Our hearts to heal' (l.36), infer that man, without his town and culture, like the rest of nature victimised by December, does not guide the war. Bearing in mind Reikie as a cave from the wind and cold, this refuge is what civilises and humanises man; what distinguishes his plight from the rest of nature in winter. In essence, culture defends and protects; heals and harmonises; rebuffs the powers that would control the individual.

It is, beyond this, the source of his power to act and the well-spring of his original innocence and happiness; the restorer of Eden, the first civil society. Hence lines 43-66 are an entreaty back to the native culture; back to the original pastoral state of harmony, healing, and fullness of life.

> Fidlers, your pins in temper fix,
> And roset weel your fiddle-sticks,
> And banish vile Italian tricks
> From out your quorum,
> Nor fortes wi' pianos mix,
> Gie's Tulloch Gorum.

For nought can cheer the heart sae weel
As can a canty Highland reel,
It even vivifies the heel
To skip and dance:
Lifeless is he wha canna feel
Its influence.

Let mirth abound, let social cheer
Invest the dawning of the year;
Let blithesome innocence appear
To crown our joy,
Nor envy wi' sarcastic sneer
Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of Aqua Vitae!
Wha sways the empire of this city,
When fou we're sometimes capernoity,
Be thou prepar'd
To hedge us frae that black banditti,
The City-Guard.

The supplication is to the fiddlers' pins in 'temper' (1.43) - restoring equal musical temperament or harmony - to banish foreign influences. Overall, in fact, Highland music enables Scots to overcome winter's gloom. It 'can cheer the heart' (1.49). It 'vivifies' the listener (1.51). It 'influence(s)' those who can 'feel' (ll.53-4); those not numbed 'Lifeless' (1.53), beyond a natural response to the national traditions of their forefathers. The second supplication calls upon traditional joys to 'Invest the dawning of the year' (1.56), and this coupled with the reappearance of 'blithesome innocence' and 'bliss' (ll.57, 60) - Eden - heralds a renewal of original control, freedom, civilisation. In the image, man clothes - 'Invest' (1.56), being from the Latin, investire, to clothe in or to surround - nature's cold season. He makes winter livable; adapts himself to the season; controls his environs. He builds upon nature. From the cave onwards this is what the national tradition is all about. The last supplication calls upon the 'great god of Aqua Vitae!', who 'sways the empire of this city' (ll.61-2), to protect the patriotic - 'hedge us' (1.65) - from the ill powers that be. However tongue-in-

cheek, this is a genuine Bacchanalian tribute to the social and festive drink that brings the old community together, and makes man once again ruler over himself and his environment. With this, then, the imagery of the introduction has moved from nature as ruler to man as ruler.

"THE DAFT-DAYS" is a particularly good representation of eighteenth century Scots humanist poetry. Winter and pastoral shelter, we have seen so often before, are rhetorically two means the humanist poet employs in differentiating between uncivilised and civilised conditions, and between Whig and humanist cultures respectively. On continuing to use this conventional humanist rhetoric, Fergusson naturally bore in mind such works as Pitcairne's "BABELL", in which the General Assembly of the Kirk is excoriated for bringing to Scotland a state of barbarity, a 'politique brute' (l.134), 'constant war' (l.125), perpetual winter, 'frost and snow' (l.9). Fergusson writes here from exactly the same point of view, for the daft-days were a Presbyterian bugbear, being the derogatory epithet they gave to the Episcopalian celebration of the Yule.[1] Meston, for example, says in "THE KNIGHT OF THE KIRK" -

> Our Knight will neither preach nor pray,
> Nor sing a psalm on Christmas day ...
>
> Quoth he, (Andrew Cant), "You call it good old Yool-day,
> 'But I say, it is good old Fool-day,
> 'O! But you say, 'tis a brave halie day,
> 'I tell you, Sirs, 'tis a brave belly day." (pp.49-50)

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1. See especially H.G. Graham The Social Life Of Scotland In The Eighteenth Century (Edinburgh 1969) 27; Pitcairne "BABELL", ll.540-562. John Ramsay of Ochtertyre says in the footnote, 'Whilst the Episcopals called Christmas-week the holidays, the Presbyterians gave it no better name than the daft days. When very young, I was reprimanded by an old gentleman for using that expression. He told me very gravely it was a Whiggish phrase.' SCOTLAND AND SCOTSMEN IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (2 vols, Edinburgh and London 1888) II, 73.

The holiday festivities and joie de vivre of "THE DAFT-DAYS" are very much in keeping, then, with a Scots Episcopal culture. At the same time the poem is grounded in the classical literature of Horace and Virgil, and has many Latinate touches - 'minimum' (1.3), 'quorum' (1.46), 'Invest' (1.56), 'Aqua Vitae!' (1.61) - which remind us of the Latinist tradition in Scotland. The serious use of the Habbie stanza both recalls its implied meaning as a satirical weapon against the Presbytery, and demonstrates the humanist quality of building upon past traditions. And Fergusson's penultimate stanze, part of which reads -

> Let blithesome innocence appear
> To crown our joy,
> Nor envy wi' sarcastic sneer
> Our bliss destroy.
>
> (11.57-60)

- has more than a hint of Alexander of Struan's last stanza in "The 20th PSALM imitated from BUCHANAN", a lament for the Stuarts.

> O! let our party Hearts have Peace,
> And Innocence restore,
> Then shall thy sacred Law take Place,
> And Faction rule no more.
>
> (p.235)

The various elements make up a very complete Scots humanist poem.

CHAPTER 8

THE IDEALISED CITY OF THE PAST

All Fergusson's verse, indeed all humanist verse, is fundamentally elegiac; it begins with the assumption that the world is imperfect, that it has fallen from grace. As with the disintegrating Tory ideal in the country, there is in Fergusson's poetry an ideal, imagined city of the past, hopelessly toppling as the new Babylon lays down its foundations: city of chaos, dirt, noise, broken communication, pernicious luxury, disorder. In essence the poet follows in his representation the timeless humanist imperative, attempting 'to create order out of disorder, and to make sense of life'.[1] "HALLOW-FAIR" and "LEITH RACES" make just such a clear demarcation between the two cities of past and present in their thesis - antithesis structures. The two cities embody two quite different Scottish cultures: Auld Reikie, the pastoral, civilised, humanist culture; and Edina, the Athens of the north, but more often, Babylon, the counterpastoral, brutal, Whig/Presbyterian culture. "HALLOW-FAIR", "LEITH RACES", "The ELECTION", "The KING'S BIRTHDAY in EDINBURGH", satirise the new Babylon; the poems of this group celebrate an older Scotland, and Auld Reikie, in the same elegiac vein as "THE DAFT-DAYS".

"CALLER WATER" in fact follows closely on the lines of "THE DAFT-DAYS", being again occasional - it celebrates May-day in Edinburgh - and pleading the cause of a moribund humanist society. The pastoral metaphor comes into play quite extensively here through the idea of the cultivated garden - metaphor for civilisation and cultural continuity - through which pure water flows. Through the metaphor the poet assumes that Scotland's past agrarian life and her humanist

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1. Though looking at a totally different sort of chaotic society, Nadine Gordiner's view of the writer is very apt here. Jane Taylor, NADINE GORDINER: PROPHET OF BLACK REVOLUTION', Sunday Times Magazine, 30 August 1981, 43.

culture, which maintained the ancient customs, approximate Eden. The assumption is put to us in the rather humorous opening as a Scots Adam tills a very Scoticised garden of Eden.

> WHAN father Adie first pat spade in
> The bonny yeard of antient Eden,
> His amry had nae liquor laid in
> To fire his mou',
> Nor did he thole his wife's upbraiding'
> For being fou.
>
> A caller burn o' siller sheen,
> Ran cannily out o'er the green,
> And whan our gutcher's drouth had been
> To bide right sair,
> He loutit down and drank bedeen
> A dainty skair.
>
> (11.1-12)

Once our amusement subsides, we realise that we have been cunningly re-introduced to the pastoral - counterpastoral statement, couched similarly to the water imagery of "LEITH RACES". The "CALLER WATER" of the title, the forefathers' 'caller burn o' siller sheen' (1.7), represents in turn the health of the past (11.13-16), Scots poetry (11.25-30), clear communication and social and physical wellbeing (11.37-54), natural beauty, natural endowments and graces (11.55-60, 67-78), national customs (11.79-84), continuity of the natural Scotland and of inspired poetry (11.85-90). In the main, it is a symbol of nature and the natural state of Scotland, its traditional state, which, like pure water, flows unchanged generation after generation from the past to the present and future. As with the 'Foul WATER' of "LEITH RACES" (1.107), the 'Fuddlin' ... sea of wine' (11.19, 23), like the polluted drink of the browster wives at the Races, symbolises obstructed literary and social intercourse (11.19-24), harmful doctors' cures and the diseases they fail to control (11.41-54), barrenness, dirt, ugliness, and social pretentiousness (11.61-66). It signifies art, - man's interference with natural processes - the city of chaos,

social breakdown and stagnancy.

Adding on lines 13-30 to the first section, we observe an intentional distinction between a pastoral past, where Scotland was Eden, and a chaotic present.

> His bairns a' before the flood
> Had langer tack o' flesh and blood,
> And on mair pithy shanks they stood
> Than Noah's line,
> Wha still hae been a feckless brood
> Wi' drinking wine.
>
> The fuddlin' Bardies now-a-days
> Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise,
> And limp and stoiter thro' their lays
> Anacreontic,
> While each his sea of wine displays
> As big's the Pontic.
>
> My muse will no gang far frae hame,
> Or scour a' airths to hound for fame;
> In troth, the jillet ye might blame
> For thinking on't,
> Whan eithly she can find the theme
> Of acqua font.

All Adie's perceptions are clear and direct. He has peace at home, wellbeing and plenty, and sires strong, effectual offspring. The modern is his total opposite. He is 'feckless', weak, confused (ll.17-18), and his poets use neoclassical language to obscure communication.

Lines 31-42 develop the theme of the present as chaos, as the new Babylon, Scotland of the reformers. As with "HALLOW-FAIR", communication, the lack of it and, implicitly, the lack of social order, is the main issue.

> This (acqua font) is the name that doctors use
> Their patients noddles to confuse;
> Wi' simples clad in terms abstruse,
> They labour still,
> In kittle words to gar you roose
> Their want o' skill.
>
> But we'll hae nae sick clitter-clatter,
> And briefly to expound the matter,

It shall be ca'd good Caller Water,
Than whilk I trow,
Few drogs in doctors shops are better
For me or you.

With the entrance of the doctors, who are said to do for conversation what the 'fuddlin' Bardies' (l.19) do for literary expression, Fergusson alludes to the Presbyterian Scotland of humanist literature; as Swift says, at large

Reformers and physicians differ but in name,
One end in both, and the design the same;
Cordials are in their talk, whilst all they mean
Is but the patient's death, and gain -----

(Swift "ODE To Dr. WILLIAM SANCROFT", ll.255-58)

Meston, for example, commonly compares the reformers' conversion of the rabble to the doctors' maltreatment of unwitting patients.

Thus Mountebanks and Urine gazers,
Armed with Pincers, Laucets, Razors,
With Spatulas and Clyster-pipes,
Close siege lay to their patients tripes,
Till they have turned out what's in,
And then to stuff them do begin,
With such sophistic Drugs and Pills,
Which leaves them sicker, or else kills;
Or cunningly their teeth he draws,
And so depopulates their jaws,
Yet very gravely does assure them,
There is no other way to cure them,
And then expects right ample Fees,
For cures far worse than the disease.

(MOB contra MOB, "CANTO II", pp.203-04)

Lines 43-54 continue to poke fun at doctors' 'drogs', which in no way match up to 'Caller Water' (l.45)

Tho' joints are stiff as ony rung,
Your pith wi' pain be fairly dung,
Be you in Caller Water flung
Out o'er the lugs,
'Twill mak you souple, swack and young,
Withouten drugs.

Tho' cholic or the heart-scad teaze us,
Or ony inward pain should seize us,
It masters a' sic fell diseases
That would ye spulzie,

> And brings them to a canny crisis
> Wi' little tulzie.

Fun, perhaps self-satire - the humanist laughing at his own playful assertions - is the intention of the passage. But behind it are conscious - consciously derivative -, and, by that very fact, more serious reminders of humanist culture. Fergusson constantly remains close to his humanist sources, like the popular folklore of St Anton's well, as Mercer declares, 'so celebrated of old for its miraculous, but probably fabulous, cures ...' ("NOTES" to "ARTHUR's SEAT", p.44), or Claudero's "On laying the Foundation Stone of St. Bernard's Mineral Well".

> This Water so healthful near Ed'nburgh doth rise,
> Which not only Bath, but Moffat outvies,
> Most diseases of nature it quickly doth cure,
> Except the disease that is got from a whore.
> It cleans the intestines, and appetite gives,
> While morbisic matter it quite away drives:
> Its amazing effects cannot be deny'd,
> And drugs are quite useless where it is apply'd:
> So what Doctors can't cure is done by this Spring ...
>
> (p.22)

Then too, there is a solid classical basis for the poet's affirmation, closely related to ancient notions of 'municipal improvement', as Lewis Mumford notes in his discussion of ancient Olympia, Delphi and Cos, and Hippocrates' treatises on Air, Water, and Places.

> The understanding of the importance of pure water not merely provided an incentive to municipal improvement: it led to the exploration of the curative properties of mineral springs; so that out of the original centres of medical treatment came their lineal descendants, the health resorts that specialized in natural hot and cold baths and copious water drinking. Bath itself in England was such a Roman centre; and a belief in baths, including an appreciation of salt-water bathing, came back in the eighteenth century as a direct outcome of the classic-romantic revival, a whole century before fresh air and sunlight came to be regarded as the natural scientifically established method of combating rickets and tuberculosis.[1]

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1. The City in History, 167-68.

When the literary and philosophical allusions which tinge the humanist imagery are taken together with the humanist rhetorical structure (e.g. 'fell diseases' (1.51), the passage can be understood to argue, albeit indirectly, for social and literary traditions over borrowed and imposed Whig practices.

Lines 55-78 see a recapitulation of the pastoral theme in a form reminiscent of "LEITH RACES", Stanza XVI, on the spurious natural appearance of the town whores ---

XVI

Around whare'er ye fling your een,
  The HAIKS like wind are scourin';
Some chaises honest folk contain,
  An' some hae mony a WHORE in;
Wi' rose and lilly, red and white,
  They gie themselves sic fit airs,
Like DIAN, they will seem perfite;
  But its nae goud that glitters
    Wi' them thir days.

(11.136-44)

Fergusson fully associates the idea of an unnatural disguise with his notions of civilised, or social, clothing, what one covers oneself with in one's dress and toilet; one's complete public face. The whores' unnatural covering here is but a 'clarty masquerade' (1.63), an extinguisher of love and, thereby, of society; a stagnant pond.

Wer't na for it the bonny lasses
Would glowr nae mair in keeking glasses,
And soon tine dint o' a' the graces
    That aft conveen
In gleefu' looks and bonny faces,
    To catch our ein.

The fairest then might die a maid,
And Cupid quit his shooting trade,
For wha thro' clarty masquerade
    Could than discover,
Whether the features under shade
    Were worth a lover?

(11.55-66)

The traditional Edinburgh lasses have a natural and civilised appearance,

'a bloom' (l.70) which promises marriage and offspring (ll.70-72). Moreover, tradition, Auld Reikie's 'caller burn' (l.75), is for them what summer rains are for the 'birken bow'rs' which they - note the humanist rhetoric - 'cleed' (l.68); it is a source of life and continuity.

> As simmer rains bring simmer show'rs,
> And leaves to cleed the birken bow'rs,
> Sae beauty gets by caller show'rs,
> Sae rich a bloom
> As for estate, or heavy dow'rs
> Aft stands in room.
>
> What makes Auld Reikie's dames sae fair,
> It canna be the halesome air,
> But caller burn beyond compare,
> The best of ony,
> That gars them a' sic graces skair,
> And blink sae bonny.
>
> (ll.67-78)

Reikie's 'caller burn' (l.75), another humanist water image symbolising perpetuity and the flow of history, set off in italics by the printer, links a modern, traditional Edinburgh, in the rhetorical structure, with the 'caller burn' (l.7) of the forefathers' Eden. The tension balanced in these lines, then, is between death, ugliness and impotence, and life, beauty and growth; between an Edinburgh doomed to ruin and stagnancy and an Auld Reikie in harmony with the life cycle, constantly renewing itself, as with the 'birken bow'rs' reclaiming their leaves (l.68). On one side we have the city of chaos; on the other, a civilised Auld Reikie.

In the light of this, the last lines reveal a different intent to the poem than the glorification of caller water. It is, instead, the glorification of tradition, the old folkways of Adie's Scotland, before ancient customs were broken.

> On May-day in a fairy ring,
> We've seen them round St. Anthon's spring,
> Frae grass the caller dew draps wring

To weet their ein,
And water clear as chrystal spring,
To synd them clean.

O may they still pursue the way
To look sae feat, sae clean, sae gay!
Than shall their beauties glance like May,
And, like her, be
The goddess of the vocal Spray,
To Muse, and me.

(11.79-90)

The point he is driving at is that a Scottish Eden yet exists for those following the customary holidays; hence, in the May-day festivities the lasses are part of the natural cycle. Touched by the 'dew draps' (1.81) and the water of St Anthon's spring (11.83-84) they are at one with the season - 'their beauties glance like May' (1.87) - because, and the poet hopes that they may ever do so, they 'pursue the way' (1.85) of tradition. Rhetorically, they are 'clean' (11.84, 86), cleansed by 'water clear as chrystal spring' (1.83); the modern city is 'clarty' (1.63). Weighing up the rhetoric of water as a symbol of historical continuity; the equation of pastoral with Scots customs; the celebration of an ancient holiday associated with a saint, while festivals during saints' days were proscribed by the Presbytery; the idea of joy as a positive good; we easily grasp that "CALLER WATER" is about the survival of the Scots humanist culture.

"DUMFRIES" is yet a more apparent example of the formula, pastoral implies anti-Whig. In it we have a satire, framed in the anti-Whig Habbie stanza, on Charles Churchill, notorious for his anti-Scottish poem, the Prophecy Of Famine, and generally for his vehement opposition to the Scots prime minister Lord Bute; we also have an idyllic portrayal of Dumfries, not a rural village at all, but an old royal burgh, a bustling centre known as 'Queen of the South'. Writing in 1906 a local historian notes that before 1750 'the sky-line of the

town ... did not differ very materially from what it is at present'.[1] Furthermore, by 1773, when "DUMFRIES" was published, the town had recently undergone numerous architectural improvements, and, in fact, was ahead of its time in devising a scheme for supplying water to the town by the most sophisticated technological means.[2] So once more we are confronted with a city which, because of the traditions it maintains and the pastoral metaphor at work in his art, Fergusson represents as a village; we are confronted with the poles of England as city and Scotland, country; with the city housing Whigs and the country, Tories. Significantly, Fergusson, as it happens, composed "DUMFRIES" while in the company of Charles Salmon, a journeyman printer, poet laureate of the Royal Oak Club, and, most notably, an assiduous Jacobite.

This is an occasional piece, written on the spur of the moment for the Dumfries friends who had regaled the poet so excellently in September 1773, not remarkable for form, but for the metaphors and ideas it puts across.

Lines 1-24 show how inextricably connected were pastoral and anti-Whig in the poet's imagination, as he takes issue with Churchill, who, as Kirkill (l.7) has been chopped down to Scots village size, and uses the example of Dumfries to counter that Whig satirist's view of Scotland that

> "No living thing, whate'er its food, feasts there,
> But the cameleon, who can feast on air."
>
> (Prophecy Of Famine, 11.300-301)

> The gods sure in some canny hour,
> To bonny Nith hae t'aen a tour,
> Whare bonny blinks the caller flow'r
> Beside the stream,

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1. William McDowall History Of The Burgh Of Dumfries (3rd edit., Dumfries 1906) 547.

2. McDowall History Of Dumfries, 623.

And sportive there hae shawn their pow'r
In fairy dream.

Had Kirkhill here but kent the gate,
The beauties on Dumfries that wait,
He'd never turn'd his canker'd pate
Of satire keen,
Whan ilka thing's sae trig and feat,
To cheer the ein.

I' ken the stirrah loo'd fu' weil
Amang the drinking loons to reel,
An Claret wine or Porter sweel,
Whilk he cou'd get,
After a shank o' beer he'd peel,
His craig to wet.

Marshall's an Bushby's then had fund
Some kitchen gude, to lay the grund,
And Cheshire mites had helped to hund
And fley awa'
The heart-scad an' a scud o' wind
Frae stamach raw.

Dumfries, like the Auld Reikie of "CALLER WATER", is a Scots Eden, a garden of the 'caller flow'r', clear 'stream' (ll.3-4), 'beauties' (l.8), health (ll.21-4) and plenty. But, even more, it is an Eden supremely ordered and civilised. In "AN ECLOGUE, To ... Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE", Wilkie's farm, 'Ay better faugh'd an' snodit than the lave' is said to 'delight the view' (ll.65-66, 69); in "LEITH RACES" the spectacle of a bountiful nature spreading her cloak 'o'er ilka rigg o' corn' is said 'To charm our roving een' (ll.3-4). Here the sight of 'ilka thing('s) sae trig and feat' is meant 'To cheer the ein' (ll.11-12). A nature ordered and made productive by man's industry, like an ordered Tory social structure, or, for that matter, Tory cosmos regulated from on high, is the prospect Fergusson holds in mind, against the Whig city of chaos, that 'overgrown monster', like Smollett's London, formless, jumbled, disorderly (Humphry Clinker, 118-119).

In lines 25-36 the mood is lighter. Obviously the poet enjoyed

his holiday. With tongue-in-cheek he toasts Dumfries as the best of all Horatian retreats.

> Had Horace liv'd, that pleasant sinner,
> That loo'd gude wine to synd his dinner,
> His muse tho' douf, the de'il be in her,
> She'd lous'd her tongue,
> The drink cou'd round Parnassus rin her
> In blythest sang.
>
> Nae mair he'd sung to auld Maecenas,
> The blinking ein o' bonny Venus,
> His leave o' them he'd ta'en at anis
> For Claret here,
> Which Jove and a' his Gods still rain us
> Frae year to year.

Along with the jubilant society, good drink and poetry, is another Horatian supposition: the belief that one's own simple locality is preferable to another's, however grander. By this principle, Horace's Sabine farm is more desirable than Rome; Dumfries is to be preferred to London, the seat of Whig society.

> Why do we try for so much so hard with such
> little time? Why do we turn to countries
> warmed by a different sun? What exile from
> home escapes himself too?

> You are surrounded by a hundred mooing
> herds of Sicilian cattle, you can hear
> your racehorse whinny, you are dressed
> in wool double-dyed with Af-
> rican purple; I was not cheated by Fate,
> who gave me a little farm and a spirit
> sensitive to Grecian poetry, above
> the crowd and its spite.

(Horace "ODE II.16", pp.95-6)

> Get away from disgusting luxury, and
> your mountainous mansion that touches tall clouds;
> put aside the fascination of
> blessed Rome, her smoke and glamour and noise.
>
> Very often the wealthy enjoy a change,
> and plain suppers beneath a poor man's small roof,
> without tapestries and purple cloths,
> have been known to smooth a worried forehead.

("Ode III.29", p.151)

The poem closes with an invocation to Jove for the age-old requirements of the Stoic and humanist: 'just enough'; as Horace says, 'A brook with clear water, a few wooded acres, / and confidence in my crops ...' ("Ode III.16", p.133)

> O Jove, man, gie's some orrow pence,
> Mair siller, an' a wie mair sense,
> I'd big to you a rural spence,
> An' bide a' simmer,
> An' cald frae saul and body fence
> With frequent brimmer.
>
> (11.37-42)

Fergusson's invocation, it should be noted, brings in the humanist symbols of civilisation, shelter and protection from the cold, thus rhetorically completing his notions of Eden as an ordered outdoors in summer and a warm winter shelter where, as he states elsewhere,

> The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields ...
>
> ("AN ECLOGUE, To ... Dr WILLIAM WILKIE", 1.15).

In both cases the individual recreates his paradise.

With "CALLER OYSTERS" we return to the poet's home ground, as in "CALLER WATER", to the old Edinburgh he wished to enshrine. Here, though, the poet focuses on a more modern town as he commends the successful fishing industry which saw Leith merchants selling huge quantities of oysters to London by 1773. As a humanist Fergusson accepted progress - he was not a reactionary - but progress, not as the literati would have it, for pure utility or as an end in itself. Progress as we saw in poems like "ODE to the BEE", was for him an expression of man's industry and will, a higher means of survival. For the humanist progress was never to lose sight of that civilised Eden as its end; it was to be tempered with responsibility and tradition.

Lines 1-24 blend together just such concerns: industry and

progress, cultural continuity and free will. Thus, the opening revels in the bounty of the Forth fishing industry -

> OF a' the waters that can hobble
> A fishin yole or salmon coble,
> And can reward the fishers trouble,
> Or south or north,
> There's nane sae spacious and sae noble
> As Firth o' Forth.
>
> In her the skate and codlin sail,
> The eil fou souple wags her tail,
> Wi' herrin, fleuk, and mackarel,
> And whitens dainty:
> Their spindle-shanks the labsters trail,
> Wi' partans plenty.
>
> (11.1-12)

- only to be tempered in admirably concentrated images and statements by the subject of tradition.

> AULD REIKIE'S sons blyth faces wear;
> September's merry month is near,
> That brings in Neptune's caller chere,
> New oysters fresh;
> The halesomest and nicest gear
> Of fish or flesh.
>
> (11.13-18)

That first image of parent and child - 'AULD REIKIE's sons' (1.13), like so much of Fergusson'n nature imagery where nature nurtures her young, is fraught with meaning. It is, of course, an image of protection, hence civilisation, in humanist terms; and also of perpetuity and custom: the knowledge and experience of the father passing to the son, the lore of the town inspiring the next generations. History and tradition can also be read into the 'blyth faces' of 'September's merry month' (11.13-14) because the coming of the oysters was yet another traditional festival time, 'a winter entertainment' full of music, dancing, and great festivity.[1] The other implication of

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1. See Topham Letters, 128-133. Cf. Claudero "To the same", p.91.

'REIKIE's sons blyth faces' and 'September's merry month' is that the two are in harmony, for the townsmen use the harvest of the season for their own productive ends and it affords them spiritual and physical wellbeing. Completing the logical pattern lines 19-24 infer that industry and tradition permit man to act freely.

> O! then we needna gie a plack
> For dand'ring mountebank or quack,
> Wha o' their drogs sae bauldly crack,
> And spred sic notions,
> As gar their feckless patient tak
> Their stinkin potions.

Fergusson, as a rule, never broaches the subject of free will without reference to the Presbytery or Whiggism; to those who upheld theories of predestination and determinism. As we saw in "CALLER WATER", the doctors are literary symbols of the Presbytery and its belief that man can be made by forces outside himself. Certainly the rhetoric of dirt and disease, 'stinkin potions' (l.24), reinforces this identification of Whig and Presbyterian.

Lines 25-54 sustain the very same themes, starting with the feckless doctors, disease and wellbeing.

> Come prie, frail man! for gin thou art sick,
> The oyster is a rare cathartic,
> As ever doctor patient gart lick
> To cure his ails;
> Whether you hae the head or heart-ake,
> It ay prevails.
>
> Ye tiplers, open a' your poses,
> Ye wha are faush'd wi' plouky noses,
> Fling owr your craig sufficient doses,
> You'll thole a hunder,
> To fleg awa' your simmer roses,
> And naething under.
>
> (11.25-36)

This is precisely the same type of tongue-in-cheek cure recommended in "CALLER WATER", yet there remains the underlying seriousness of the disease/wellbeing, predestination/free will, Whig-Presbyterian/Tory-

Humanist rhetoric. And, however, concealed in the humour, there is, as in "CALLER WATER", a point embedded in the irony; the cure for Reikie's diseased sons is not so much caller oysters as the society, aggregating in the oyster cellars of the old town, which centres round them.

> Whan big as burns the gutters rin,
> Gin ye hae catcht a droukit skin,
> To Luckie Middlemist's loup in,
> And sit fu snug
> Oe'r oysters and a dram o' gin,
> Or haddock lug.
>
> When auld Saunt Giles, at aught o'clock,
> Gars merchant lowns their chopies lock,
> There we-adjourn wi' hearty fock
> To birle our bodles,
> And get wharewi' to crack our joke,
> And clear our noddles.
>
> Whan Phoebus did his windocks steek,
> How aften at that ingle cheek
> Did I my frosty fingers beek,
> And taste gude fare?
> I trow there was nae hame to seek
> Whan steghin there.
>
> (11.37-54)

Here too is the rural metaphor urging the formula, the culture of old Edinburgh = pastoral. Incidentally, Luckie Middlemist's was one of the oyster cellars frequented by the poet where traditional country dancing to the bagpipes, harp or fiddle was part of the evening's entertainment. Through the metaphor Luckie Middlemist's becomes a country cottage, the poet's most frequent symbol of civilisation. Against the raw wintry elements, the rains making the gutters 'big as burns' (1.37), and cold night air stinging 'frosty fingers' (1.51), the oyster cellar is for the poet what the cottage was for the gudeman of "The FARMER's INGLE":'hame', 'gude fare', life centring in the 'ingle' (11.50-53), the most basic source of civilised existence. The two lines about 'Phoebus' and life round the 'ingle cheek' (11.49-50) are thus care-

fully balanced and thought out. Again, it is that idea 'The ingle-nook supplies the summer fields' ("AN ECLOGUE, To ... WILKIE", l.15), for when the sun is down the townsmen flourish indoors through their own provision. Rhetorically, we are very much in a humanist setting at Luckie Middlemist's, the counter-agent, with its salubrious food and society, to disease, and the shelter against winter.

As the poem began with reflections on industry and progress so it closes. Lines 55-78 underline the absolute good of tempered progress, in the fisher-wives' 'top livin' (l.62) and the 'siller' (l.68) spent on festive drink, and the evil of progress as an end in itself, or as a means of enriching a few. Luxury for the Enlightenment thinker was a positive good; it allegedly improved the material prosperity of all. For the humanist it was an abhorrence; a social evil; hence the poet's preference for simple fare and 'just enough'.

> While glakit fools, o'er rife O' cash,
> Pamper their weyms wi' fousom trash,
> I think a chiel may gayly pass;
> He's no ill boden
> That gusts his gabb wi' oyster sauce,
> And hen weel soden.
>
> (ll.55-60)

As in "A DRINK ECLOGUE" Fergusson relates luxury to anti-social behaviour, but traditional industries and industriousness to worthwhile activity for the community. In the lines that follow there is with a feeling for the prospering fishing industry the spirit of joy, festivity, high jinks.

> At Musselbrough, and eke Newhaven,
> The fisher-wives will get top livin,
> Whan lads gang out on Sunday's even
> To treat their joes,
> And tak of fat pandours a prieven,
> Or mussel brose:

Than sometimes 'ere they flit their doup,
They'll ablins a' their siller coup
For liquor clear frae cutty stoup,
To weet their wizen,
And swallow o'er a dainty soup,
For fear they gizzen.

A' ye wha canna stand sae sicker,
Whan twice you've toom'd the big ars'd bicker,
Mix caller oysters wi' your liquor,
And I'm your debtor,
If greedy priest or drouthy vicar
Will thole it better.

(11.61-78)

There is no clash of interests between the fisher-wives' 'top livin' (1.62) and celebrating community. This, then is humane industry, with a social perspective borne in mind. It is the Whig utilitarians who have the balance wrong. Rhetorically, as in "LEITH RACES", they are associated with 'fousom trash' (1.56) and ill being. Additionally, joy - a very un-Presbyterian Sunday joy - is the keynote of the passage: the frolics of the 'lads' and their 'joes' (11.63-4), and the imagined antics, purportedly for reasons of comparison, of 'priest or drouthy vicar' (11.77-78). Quite simply, the joy-gloom contrast is used also to distinguish Whig from Tory; dour luxury from humane industry. And again the poet has appropriately cast the piece in the Habbie stanza to underline his position.

Contrast and balance have even more to do with "AULD REIKIE, A POEM", Fergusson's most elaborate exposition of the Scots humanist city of the past: city that mirrors in miniature nature's harmony, indeed the entire cosmos, embodying the universal principle of concordia discors, the ancient humanist - later Tory - view of harmony through variety and opposition.[1] Fergusson begins precisely with the same assumptions of Denham and Pope, as expressed in their

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1. See Earl R. Wasserman The Subtler Language 107-08, 177.

most celebrated local poems.

> Wisely she knew, the harmony of things,
> As well as that of sounds, from discords springs.
> Form, order, beauty through the Universe;
> While driness moysture, coldness heat resists,
> All that we have, and that we are, subsists.
> While the steep horrid roughness of the Wood
> Strives with the gentle calmness of the flood.
> Such huge extreams when Nature doth unite,
> Wonder from thence results, from thence delight.
>
> (Denham "Cooper's Hill", ll.203-12)

> Here Earth and Water seem to strive again,
> Not Chaos-like together crush'd and bruis'd,
> But as the World, harmoniously confus'd:
> Where Order in Variety we see,
> And where, tho' all things differ, all agree.
>
> (Pope "Windsor Forest", ll.12-16)

This city is the exact opposite of the Whig city of chaos, where unbalanced extremes wreak havoc. It is, like Pope's "Windsor Forest", a Tory 'paradise', and 'Eden' of 'harmonious confusion, or ordered variety'.[1] This is a poem in which the humanist rhetoric, expecially of pastoral and shelter, is solidly underpinned by a careful architectural balance of themes and structure in harmonious opposition. There is the unremitting interplay of physical light (ll. 2, 9-11, 23, 46, 59-60, 179, 203, 247, 289-92, 299) and dark (ll. 67, 82, 271-72, 306) and a more symbolic, often artificial light (ll. 6, 69-70, 81, 87, 100, 111, 125-26, 152, 160, 363-64) and artificial dark (ll. 98, 143, 164, 172, 191-92, 302, 313, 346, 350); sweet scents (ll. 9, 48, 149-50, 195-218, 253-54, 264-65, 291-92, 362) and stinks (ll. 30, 35-40, 43-44, 84, 88, 102, 117, 129-30, 189, 219-24, 228, 251-52, 271-72); feelings of oppression, false joy or sorrow (ll. 27-8, 61, 87-8, 93-4, 98-99, 113, 122, 162-66, 170-94, 271-84, 314-17, 359-60) and joy (ll. 5-6, 135-40, 145-52, 157, 161, 209, 247-58, 269-70); growth

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1. Wasserman, Subtler Language, 103, 111.

(ll. 8-10, 149-50, 195-218, 291-92, 323-24, 362) and death (ll. 11-16, 142, 161-94, 335-36); poverty (ll. 153-54, 285-312, 329-36) and prosperity (ll. 61-6, 149-52, 195-202, 314-18, 325-28); pride (ll. 1-2, 17-22, 155-56, 197-98, 263-67, 295-300, 313-28, 359-68) and shame (ll. 97-8, 117-30, 227-30, 275-84, 329-50, 351-58); civilisation - rhetorically, shelter, nature, pastoral (ll. 17-22, 195-218, 263-64, 271-74, 285-300, 361-62) and savagery - artifice, false appearance (ll. 63-66, 67-130, 161-94, 227-30, 231-46, 259-62, 335-40). In addition, the time sequence mirrors nature's rich variety and harmonious opposition as it changes from a reflection upon an idealised past (ll.1-22); a coarse (ll.23-50), mundane (ll.59-66), sordid (ll.67-130), tolerable (ll.131-60), gloomy (ll.161-94), idealised (ll.195-218), savage (ll.219-30), false (ll.231-46), joyous (ll.247-58), fanciful (ll.263-70), present; a lost historical past (ll.271-300); an impoverished present (ll.301-12); a prosperous recent past (ll. 313-28); a corrupt present (ll.329-50); a momentary present (ll.351-58); a recent past reflection (ll.359-68). Similarly, the tradition in which the poet writes is diversified, encompassing both major strains of the local or city poem. "AULD REIKIE" has elements of Dunbar's "London, thou art of Tounes A per se" and "To Aberdein", - commendatory poems; and, equally, of "The Devillis Inquest", "Tydingis fra the Sessioun", and "To the Merchantis of Edinburgh", Juvenalian satires of the town. At the same time the poem draws upon the seventeenth and eighteenth century Scottish ruin poems, especially those of John and Arthur Johnston, the numerous ruined building verse of Claudero; and the great local poems of Denham, Pope, and minor poets like Thomas Mercer.

"AULD REIKIE" is more than a universal statement about Edinburgh;

it is a process of self-revelation and reconciliation for the poet, an emotional and psychological working through the concordia discors principle from within. If he can piece together a logical puzzle of Edinburgh, he can comprehend himself and the universe about him. In this sense Paul Fussell's definition of the poet applies absolutely to Fergusson.

> The true poet is a "maker," and it is his prime function to bring order out of confusion by arranging matter until it resembles the plan he has in mind; like the Creator, he transforms chaos into order by command, and makes thereby a garden of due proportion, harmony and delight.[1]

Characteristically, Fergusson opens the poem with a pastoral reverie on the old town (ll.1-22) which he reaffirms is very much a part of the natural cycle - hence the pastoral muse makes an easy transition from the 'SIMMER's Green' to Edinburgh (ll.7-8) - and thus genuine civilisation; in summer the muse, like man himself, is at home on the green; in autumn and winter she finds sociability (ll.3-4) and shelter (ll.17-22) in the town.

> AULD REIKIE, Wale o' ilka Town
> That SCOTLAND kens beneath the Moon;
> Where couthy Chiels at E'ening meet
> Their bizzing CRAIGS and MOUS to weet;
> And blythly gar auld Care gae bye
> Wi' blinkit and wi' bleering Eye:
> O'er lang frae thee the Muse has been
> Sae frisky on the SIMMER's Green,
> Whan Flowers and Gowans wont to glent
> In bonny Blinks upo' the Bent;
> But now the LEAVES a Yellow die
> Peel'd frae the BRANCHES, quickly fly;
> And now frae nouther Bush nor Brier
> The spreckl'd MAVIS greets your ear;
> Nor bonny Blackbird SKIMS and ROVES
> To seek his Love in yonder Groves.
>
> THEN, REIKIE, welcome! Thou canst charm
> Unfleggit by the year's Alarm;

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1. THEORY OF PROSODY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND (New London, Connecticut 1954) 61.

Not Boreas that sae snelly blows,
Dare here pap in his angry Nose:
Thanks to our DADS, whase biggin stands
A Shelter to surrounding Lands.

These last lines voice several humanist ideas and ideals. There is the notion of building upon the past, accepting the legacy of the forefathers, and through the rhetoric of Reikie as a 'biggin' and 'A Shelter' (11.21-22) are carried the two crucial concepts of civilisation: victory over winter - 'Boreas' (1.19) - through environmental adaptibility, and freedom in the face of 'the year's Alarm' (1.18), winter's anger and power (1.20). Within this brief introduction is, in fact, encapsulated the concordia discors balance, as the dying autumnal fields and menacing winter winds are nicely offset by the vital welcoming and charming powers of Auld Reikie.

Lines 23-50, by the same token, counterpoise the first section as nostalgia for old Edinburgh and its pastoral splendour gives way to a vivid counterpastoral delineation of everyday Edinburgh life. Note how the first four lines drive a wedge between man and nature. Where all was harmonious before, there is now a contrast between a joyous nature and crabbed mankind.

NOW Morn, with bonny Purpie-smiles,
Kisses the Air-cock o' St. Giles;
Rakin their Ein, the Servant Lasses
Early begin their Lies and Clashes;
Ilk tells her Friend of saddest Distress,
That still she brooks frae scouling Mistress;
And wi' her Joe in Turnpike Stair
She'd rather snuff the stinking Air,
As be subjected to her Tongue,
When justly censur'd in the Wrong.

On Stair wi' TUB, or PAT in hand,
The Barefoot HOUSEMAIDS looe to stand,
That antrin Fock may ken how SNELL
Auld Reikie will at MORNING SMELL:
Then, with an INUNDATION BIG as
The BURN that 'neath the NORE LOCH BRIG is,
They kindly shower EDINA'S Roses,
To QUICKEN and REGALE our NOSES.

Now some for this, wi' Satyr's Leesh,
Ha'e gi'en auld Edinburgh a Creesh:
But without Souring nocht is sweet;
The Morning smells that hail our Street,
Prepare, and gently lead the Way
To Simmer canty, braw and gay:
Edina's Sons mair eithly share,
Her Spices and her Dainties rare,
Then he that's never yet been call'd
Aff frae his Plaidie or his Fauld.

These lines convey us from one literary city to another, from Auld Reikie the rural town to the new Babylon. Fergusson is not the photographic realist he is so often thought to be. How little difference do we find from, for instance, Swift's Dublin.

NOW hardly here and there an Hackney-Coach
Appearing, show'd the Ruddy Morns Approach.
Now Betty from her Masters Bed had flown,
And softly stole to discompose her own.
The Slipshod Prentice from his Masters Door,
Had par'd the Dirt, and Sprinkled round the Floor.
Now Moll had whirl'd her Mop with dext'rous Airs,
Prepar'd to Scrub the Entry and the Stairs.
The Youth with Broomy Stumps began to trace
The Kennel-Edge, where Wheels had worn the Place.
The Smallcoal-Man was heard with Cadence deep,
'Till drown'd in Shriller Notes of Chimney-Sweep,
Duns at his Lordships Gate began to meet,
And Brickdust Moll had Scream'd through half the Street.
The Turnkey now his Flock returning sees,
Duly let out a Nights to Steal for Fees.
The watchful Bailiffs take their silent Stands,
And School-Boys lag with Satchels in their Hands.

("A DESCRIPTION OF THE MORNING. April, 1709, (ll.1-18)

The rhetoric of noise, 'Lies and Clashes' (l.26), and dirt, 'stinking Air', 'INUNDATION BIG', 'Morning smells' (ll. 30, 37, 44), and false feeling, 'saddest Distress' (l.27), are, as we have seen, common features of the Whig city of chaos: that literary landscape, like the fetid Edinburgh of Andrew Erskine's - another humanist poet's - "Cloaciniad", alluded to with the mention of 'Satyr's Leesh' (l.41). Though the section portrays extremes of chaos, it too contains within it a balance, albeit a tenuous one at that. Whether taken literally

or ironically, the proposition 'But without Souring nocht is sweet' (l.43) adds either an earnest, stoical or a bitter political note to the light tone, and shifts the attention - and the balance - from the immediate to the more philosophical.

With lines 51-66 there is no attempt to justify Edinburgh life: only a bold face exposure of the cits' perverse nature. And these caricatures are, again, recognisable Whig figures of humanist satire, the critic,[1] the businessman, the lawyer.

> NOW Stairhead Critics, senseless Fools,
> CENSURE their AIM, and PRIDE their Rules,
> In Luckenbooths, wi' glouring Eye,
> Their Neighbours sma'est Faults descry:
> If only Loun should dander there,
> Of aukward Gate, and foreign Air,
> They trace his Steps, till they can tell
> His PEDIGREE as weel's himsell.
>
> WHAN Phoebus blinks wi' warmer Ray
> And Schools at Noonday get the play,
> Then Bus'ness, weighty Bus'ness comes;
> The Trader glours; he doubts, he hums:
> The LAWYERS eke to Cross repair,
> Their Wigs to shaw, and toss an Air;
> While busy Agent closely plies,
> And a' his kittle Cases tries.

We should bear in mind the distinction, above, between the happy natural - in the broadest sense - world, that is, 'Phoebus' and the playful 'Schools' (ll.59-60), and the dour cits; and, on a more metaphorical level, between the sun's full light and unenlightened man. This is a biting irony as the Whig stereotypes are meant to remind us of the Presbyterian's infallible 'inner light'.

And this is indeed a point developed through the imagery of the next section, lines 67-98. After the irony of the previous lines, the tone becomes decidedly moral. The Edinburgh Whigs are painted as

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1. The critic was equally one of the stereotypical Whig figures, as in Swift A TALE of a TUB, 92-104.

a reprobate lot, wholly benighted; acting under a false sun and in artificial light - the 'Globes ... blinking Rays' (l.70), the chairman's 'Light' (l.81), the whores' 'Lamp-post' (l.87), 'Fair Chastity's transparent gloss!' (l.96). Here Night is the pagan god to whom homage is paid; ironically, all light serves darkness.

NOW Night, that's cunzied chief for Fun,
Is wi' her usual Rites begun;
Thro' ilka Gate the Torches blaze,
And Globes send out their blinking Rays.
The usefu' Cadie plies in Street,
To bide the Profits o' his Feet;
For by thir Lads Auld Reikie's Fock
Ken but a SAMPLE, o' the Stock
O' Thieves, that nightly wad oppress,
And make baith Goods and Gear the less.
Near him the lazy Chairman stands,
And wats na how to turn his Hands,
Till some daft Birky, ranting fu',
Has Matters somewhere else to do;
The Chairman willing, gi'es his Light
To Deeds o' darkness and o' Night:

ITS never Sax Pence for a Lift
That gars thir Lads wi' fu'ness rift;
For they wi' better Gear are paid,
And WHORES and CULLS support their Trade.

NEAR some Lamp-post, wi' dowy Face,
Wi' heavy Ein, and sour Grimace,
Stands she that Beauty lang had kend,
Whoredom ther Trade, and Vice her End.
But see wharenow she wuns her Bread
By that which Nature ne'er decreed;
And sings sad Music to the Lugs,
'Mang Burachs o' damn'd Whores and Rogues.
Whane'er we Reputation loss
Fair Chastity's transparent gloss!
Redemption seenil kens the Name,
But a's black Misery and Shame.

The moral judgements are consistent with the earlier attack on Whig figures, the critic, businessman and lawyer; only here we have also those familiar Fergussonian figures, the dispossessed and corrupted Highlander of the town, the whore far removed from 'Nature' (l.92), and those mindless 'Burachs' (l.94), symbolic of social disorder, like the 'burrochs' of "LEITH RACES" (l.95). Note how 'weighty

Bus'ness' (1.61) - Whig industry - has been converted, with a wry twist, into prostitution: 'the Profits o' his Feet' (1.72) and the 'Trade' (11.86, 90) of the whores and pimps.

Lines 99-130 guide us further through the Whig Babylon though now the tone shifts from the moral to the mock heroic.

FRAE joyous Tavern, reeling drunk,
Wi' fiery Phizz, and Ein half sunk,
Behad the Bruiser, Fae to a'
That in the reek o' Gardies fa':
Close by his Side, a feckless Race
O' Macaronies shew their Face,
And think they're free frae Skaith or Harm,
While Pith befriends their Leaders Arm:
Yet fearfu' aften o' their Maught,
They quatt the Glory o' the Faught
To this same Warrior wha led
Thae Heroes to bright Honour's Bed;
And aft the hack o' Honour shines
In Bruiser's Face wi' Broken Lines:
Of them sad Tales he tells anon,
Whan Ramble and whan Fighting's done;
And, like Hectorian,[1] ne'er impairs
The Brag and Glory o' his Sairs.

WHAN Feet in dirty Gutters plash,
And Fock to wale their Fitstaps fash;
At night the Macaroni drunk,
In Pools or Gutters aftimes sunk:
Hegh! what a Fright he now appears,
Whan he his Corpse dejected rears!
Look at that Head, and think if there
The Pomet slaister'd up his Hair!
The Cheeks observe, where now cou'd shine
The scancing Glories o' Carmine?
Ah, Legs! in vain the Silk-worm there
Display'd to View her eidant Care;
For Stink, instead of Perfumes, grow,
And clarty Odours fragrant flow.

This section marks another important progression. Descriptively there

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1. Pope mentions 'Hectors' in "The First Satire of the Second Book of Horace Imitated", 1.71. John Butt's footnote says, "Hectors the name given to a group of dissolute young gentlemen in the second half of the seventeenth century, who swaggered 'by night about (London), breaking windows, upsetting sedans, beating quiet men, and offering rude caresses to pretty women'. Here, perhaps less specifically,''bullies'". This is yet another proof of the literary cities Fergusson has in mind throughout the poem.

has been a sinking effect, a definite movement from the ideal at the beginning, pastoral man in his ideal town, to trivial gossip, weighty business, lost Highland honour and present corruption, and here a fall into the very gutters of the streets (ll.117-24). On the other hand, rhetorically, as in "LEITH RACES", stink and dirt have gradually risen from the depths of the streets on to the people (ll.102, 117-24, 129-30). A curious balance has been achieved. Mock heroism, stink, dirt and filthy water, and, also, false light (ll.100, 110-111, 125-26): these are the imprints of the Whig and Presbyterian that underline the humanist's societal criticism.

With lines 131-160 mock heroism gives way to a mood of joy and hope. Beneath the social dregs of humanity is another layer of society set wholly apart from the 'noisy Ten-hours Drum' and the 'Trades' (ll.133-34) and the Pandemonium of the mob (l.143): a subculture which, though materially deprived, possesses some attributes of civil society.

> NOW some to Porter, some to Punch,
> Some to their Wife, and some their Wench,
> Retire, while noisy Ten-hours Drum
> Gars a' your Trades gae dandring Home.
> Now mony a Club, jocose and free,
> Gie a' to Merriment and Glee,
> Wi' Sang and Glass, they fley the Pow'r
> O' Care that wad harrass the Hour:
> For Wine and Bacchus still bear down
> Our thrawart Fortunes wildest Frown ...
>
> Now some, in PANDEMONIUM'S Shade
> Resume the gormandizing Trade;
> Whare eager LOOKS, and glancing EIN,
> Forespeak a HEART and STAMACK keen.
> Gang on, my lads; it's lang sin syne
> We kent auld EPICURUS' Line;
> Save you, the BOARD wad cease to rise,
> Bedight wi' DAINTITHS to the Skies;
> And Salamanders cease to swill
> The COMFORTS of a BURNING Gill.
>
> BUT chief, O CAPE, we crave thy Aid,
> To get our Cares and Poortith laid:
> Sincerity, and Genius true,

> Of Knights have ever been the due:
> Mirth, Music, Porter deepest dy'd,
> Are never here to Worth deny'd;
> And Health, o' Happiness the Queen,
> Blinks bonny, wi' her Smile serene.

Granted, the merriment of the passage is somewhat marred by the ironic reversal -

> It ('Wine') maks you stark, and bauld and brave,
> Ev'n whan descending to the Grave.
>
> (11.141-42)

But against the overall scheme, the ironic reversal echoes the concordia discors pattern. Furthermore, the sociability of these Cape Club members - a very humanist club at that - brings about freedom of the will, victory over 'thrawart Fortunes wildest Frown' (1.140) and over 'Cares and Poortith' (1.154). Observe how too there is no irony in the light imagery of 'glancing EIN' (1.145) - as opposed to 'heavy Ein' earlier (1.88) - and 'a BURNING Gill' (1.152), bespeaking warmth of spirit, as earlier with the effect of the natural sun's 'warmer Ray' on the schools at noon (11.59-60). The Cape Club in their conviviality are enlightened and harmonious; they are an enclave within Edinburgh affording shelter and light from 'PANDEMONIUM's Shade' (1.143) just as Reikie of the past was 'A Shelter to surrounding Lands (1.22): thus the resemblance of their physical and spiritual state to that of the rising pastoral nature of the beginning.

> NOW Morn, with bonny Purpie-smiles ... (1.23)
>
> And Health, o' Happiness the Queen,
> Blinks bonny, wi' her Smile serene. (11.159-60)

From joy our attention is now deflected to sorrow and 'Damnation' (1.186); from 'Health' (1.159) to 'Death' (1.165); from night to morning; and, in just the reverse sequence of the rising natural light, from enlightenment to the psychological darkness of the mob:

'Dim' light (l.164), 'Life's Spunk decay'd' (l.172).

THO' joy maist Part Auld Reikie owns,
Eftsoons she kens sad sorrows Frowns;
What Group is yon sae dismal grim,
Wi' Horrid Aspect, cleeding Dim?
Says Death, They'r mine, a dowy Crew,
To me they'll quickly pay their last Adieu.

HOW come mankind, whan lacking Woe,
In Saulie's Face their Heart to show,
As if they were a Clock, to tell
That Grief in them had rung her Bell?
Then, what is Man? why a' this Phraze?
Life's Spunk decay'd, nae mair can blaze.
Let sober Grief alone declare
Our fond Anxiety and Care:
Nor let the Undertakers be
The only waefu' Friends we see.

COME on, my Muse, and then rehearse
The gloomiest Theme in a' your Verse:
In Morning, whan ane keeks about,
Fu' blyth and free frae Ail, nae doubt
He lippens not to be misled
Amang the Regions of the dead:
But straight a painted Corp he sees,
Lang streekit 'neath its Canopies.
Soon, soon will this his Mirth controul,
And send Damnation to his Soul:
Or when the Dead-deal, (awful Shape!)
Makes frighted Mankind girn and gape,
Reflection then his Reason sours,
For the niest Dead-deal may be ours.
Whan Sybil led the Trojan down
To haggard PLUTO'S dreary Town,
Shapes war nor thae, I freely ween
Cou'd never meet the Soldier's Ein.

(ll.161-194)

In this mannered scene of the Presbyterian funeral,[1] Edinburgh is transformed into a city of the dead, a veritable hell on earth, 'war nor ... PLUTO'S dreary Town' (ll.192-93). This is a frontal assault on false appearance, unnatural emotions, and the entire philosophy of the moral sense, where men are but emotional mechanisms,

As if they were a Clock, to tell
That Grief in them had rung her Bell ... (ll.169-70)

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1. Cf. the lengthy description of a dour Presbyterian funeral in Topham Letters, 280-83.

- and are forced to place feeling and fear over their reason (ll.187-89).

Lines 195-230 mark two distinct contrasts: one with the previous section, where we confront a quite different Edinburgh morning, and the other, within the section itself. In the first part we are suddenly carried away from damnation and death to growth (ll.195-212), the cycle of rebirth (ll.213-14), joy (l.209), and a very civilised, modern pastoral town: the perfect synthesis of an enlightened, progressive city and an ideal rural village: the opposite of the noxious Edinburgh of the early lines.

> IF Kail sae green, or Herbs delight,
> Edina's Street attracts the Sight;
> Not Covent-garden, clad sae braw,
> Mair fouth o' Herbs can eithly shaw:
> For mony a Yeard is here sair sought,
> That Kail and Cabbage may be bought;
> And healthfu' Sallad to regale,
> Whan pamper'd wi' a heavy Meal.
> Glour up the Street in Simmer Morn,
> The Birks sae green, and sweet Brier-thorn,
> Wi' sprangit Flow'rs that scent the Gale,
> Ca' far awa' the Morning Smell,
> Wi' which our Ladies Flow'r-pat's fill'd,
> And every noxious Vapour kill'd.
> O Nature! canty, blyth and free,
> Whare is there Keeking-glass like thee?
> Is there on Earth that can compare
> Wi' Mary's Shape, and Mary's Air,
> Save the empurpl'd Speck, that grows
> In the saft Faulds of yonder Rose?
> How bonny seems the virgin Breast,
> Whan by the Lillies here carest,
> And leaves the Mind in doubt to tell
> Which maist in Sweets and Hue excel?
>
> (ll.195-218)

Just as instantaneously, however, the pastoral vision disappears, like a flash in the pan; the antithesis remains, a filthy, smelly, unsavoury, den of savagery. Accordingly, the rhetoric changes from sweet scents to foul; from the light of the sun (l.203) and 'Keeking-glass' (l.210), and the natural city as the protective, enveloping feminine principle

(ll.213-14), to the restraint and unnatural confinement of 'markest Cells' (l.222); from humanist Auld Reikie to Whig Edinburgh.

> GILLESPIE'S Snuff should prime the Nose
> Of her that to the Market goes,
> If they wad like to shun the Smells
> That buoy up frae markest Cells;
> Whare Wames o' Paunches sav'ry scent
> To Nostrils gi'e great Discontent.
> Now wha in Albion could expect
> O' Cleanliness sic great Neglect?
> Nae Hottentot that daily lairs
> 'Mang Tripe, or ither clarty Wares,
> Hath ever yet conceiv'd, or seen
> Beyond the Line, sic Scenes unclean.
>
> (ll.219-30)

With lines 231-70 we remain in the Whig/Presbyterian capital; only here the juxtapositions bring together false appearance and nature, the dour, hypocritical dissimulation and repressed emotions of the kirk devotees, and the free and natural conduct of the lovers and poets of the town. Fergusson begins with what was a very stereotype picture of practising Presbyterians,[1] and, in his subsequent contrasts, portrays the Sunday pleasures that the kirk had suppressed.[2]

> ON Sunday here, an alter'd Scene
> O' Men and Manners meets our Ein:
> Ane wad maist trow some People chose
> To change their Faces wi' their Clo'es,
> And fain wad gar ilk Neighbour think
> They thirst for Goodness, as for Drink:
> But there's an unco Dearth o' Grace,
> That has nae Mansion but the Face,
> And never can obtain a Part
> In benmost Corner of the Heart.
> Why should Religion make us sad,
> If good frae Virtue's to be had?
> Na, rather gleefu' turn your Face;
> Forsake Hypocrisy, Grimace;
> And never have it understood
> You fleg Mankind frae being good.

---

1. See, for example, Voltaire Letters Concerning The English Nation, 38-39 or Topham Letters, 190.

2. See Buckle on the kirk's opposition to Sunday courting and, even, the pleasures of scenery. On Scotland and the Scotch Intellect, 212-14, 231.

IN Afternoon, a' Brawly buskit,
The Joes and Lasses loe to frisk it:
Some tak a great delight to place
The modest Bongrace o'er the Face;
Tho' you may see, if so inclin'd,
The turning o' the Leg behind.
Now Comely-Garden, and the Park,
Refresh them, after Forenoon's Wark;
Newhaven, Leith or Canon-mills,
Supply them in their Sunday's Gills;
Whare Writers aften spend their Pence,
To stock their Heads wi' Drink and Sense.

WHILE dandring Cits delight to stray
To Castlehill, or Public Way,
Whare they nae other Purpose mean,
Than that Fool Cause o' being seen;
Let me to ARTHUR'S SEAT pursue,
Whare bonny Pastures meet the View;
And mony a Wild-lorn Scene accrues,
Befitting WILLIE SHAKESPEARE'S Muse:
If Fancy there would join the Thrang,
The desart Rocks and Hills amang,
To Echoes we should lilt and play,
And gie to MIRTH the lee-lang Day.

The dichotomy here does not simply consist of gloom and 'MIRTH' (l.270), as in the introductory lines of "LEITH RACES", but of restricted thought, inspired by fear (l.246); and natural inclinations and the free imagination - 'Fancy' (l.267) - which enable poetic art to transcend the more severe aspects of Edinburgh life. It is interesting to note that in this stultifying atmosphere of Sunday in the town, Captain Topham makes the same observations as Fergusson in lines 247-54; namely, that natural impulses could not be shackled by the kirk.

> The young Girls, who have been melting in devotion for the space of six or seven hours, take walks in the meadows and other places with their Lovers, in order to amuse themselves: and, what you will probably think very strange, it often happens that this heavenly temper of mind produces effects which are quite the reverse. [1]

Freedom of a different sort is the theme of lines 271-312 in which human shelter and the last vestiges of civilisation lie outwith

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1. Letters, 236.

the confines of the modern town. We find them, instead, in the open fields of the King's Park, a sanctuary for insolvent debtors, and through the pathetic efforts of 'naked Poets' (l.311) to clothe themselves in an uncharitable society. To put it simply, civilisation abides beyond the pale of modern civil society, which is in a state of decline, like the once famed seat of Scotland's ancient kings, Holyrood Palace. Accordingly, observe how the light imagery changes from the dark showery scene at Holyrood to 'sunny Braes' and Apollo's cheery rays' in the park (ll.289-90); how the shelter imagery moves from the derelict palace to 'sequester'd' fields and 'Vales in Simmer Claise' (ll.287, 292), from 'Din' and 'DUNS' and 'Bolts' (lo.287, 295, 300) to 'the Bliss of open Sky' (l.299); from 'Clase / In thread-bare Autumn o' their Days' (ll.301-02) to 'Vales in Simmer Claise bedight' (l.292).

OR shou'd some canker'd biting Show'r
The Day and a' her Sweets deflour,
To Holy-rood-house let me stray,
And gie to musing a' the Day;
Lamenting what auld SCOTLAND knew
Bien Days for ever frae her View:
O HAMILTON, for shame! the Muse
Would pay to thee her couthy Vows,
Gin ye wad tent the humble Strain
And gie's our Dignity again:
For O, waes me! the Thistle springs
In DOMICILE of ancient Kings,
Without a Patriot to regrete
Our PALACE, and our ancient STATE.

BLEST Place! whare DEBTORS daily run,
To rid themselves frae Jail and Dun;
Here, tho' sequester'd frae the Din
That rings AULD REIKIE'S Waas within,
Yet they may tread the sunny Braes,
And brook Apollo's cheery rays;
Glour frae ST. ANTHON'S grassy Hight,
O'er Vales in Simmer Claise bedight,
Nor ever hing their Head, I ween,
Wi' jealour Fear o' being seen.
May I, whanever DUNS come nigh,
And shake my Garret wi' their Cry,
Scour here wi' Haste, Protection get,

To screen mysell frae them and Debt;
To breathe the Bliss of open Sky,
And SIMON FRASER'S Bolts defy.

NOW gin a Lown should ha'e his Clase
In Thread-bare Autumn o' their Days,
St. MARY, Brokers Guardian Saint,
Will satisfy ilk Ail and Want;
For mony a hungry Writer, there
Dives down at Night, wi' cleading bare,
And quickly rises to the View
A Gentleman, perfyte and new.
Ye rich Fock, look no wi' Disdain
Upo' this ancient Brokage Lane!
For naked Poets are supplied,
With what you to their Wants deny'd.

A tenuous balance resides in weighing up real historical facts against the conventional rendering of these facts in humanist literature; that is, in weighing up the historical with the purely literary. Both come together with a unity of effect: the facts: that Holyrood thistle chapel was destroyed by the Presbyterian mob after the Reformation; that its roof was poorly rebuilt in 1758 by commission of the Duke of Hamilton, its heritable keeper, and collapsed in 1768 taking more of the building with it; that Hamilton left all but his apartments in Holyrood a total shambles; that - the mention of the Stewart kings reminds us - in 1681 Holyrood courtyard was the scene of the riding of the Scottish parliament under James VII, and that Bonnie Prince Charlie had lodged there under the banner of the '45; the popular issue of debtors' punishment and even the neglect of native poets, with the removal of the Scots court: and the humanist literary matters: the theme of Hamilton's - as Mercer says in his "NOTES to Arthur's SEAT" (p.45) - 'scandalous mismanagement' of the palace -

Let Scotia's sons then hear my theme,
And join to curse the hated name.
Of this vile wretch, who, in disdain,
Did our most hallow'd places stain.
With sacriligious disrespect,
An office-house he did erect,
Within the Abbey's sacred shrine,

Where long the dust of kings had lain,
Both undisturb'd, and much rever'd,
By pious Scots held in regard.

Edina's sons, indignant view,
The gross affront that's done to you;
Shew your resentment at this deed,
For which all loyal hearts do bleed;
And hate the rogue who did the blame,
But not the place from whence he came.

(Claudero "Scotland in Tears for the horrid Treatment of their Kings Sepulchres", pp.9-10)

- of the debtors' refuge within the park -

I walk'd to that once happy royal Palace,
Which now laments the absence of her Monarch:
Whose Bosom still remains a bless'd Retreat
To those, who do not share in prosp'rous Fortune.
I view'd her Gali'ry lin'd with royal Faces,
The empty Image of her former Grandeur.

(Alexander Pennecuik "A Morning Walk To ARTHUR's SEAT", p.170)[1]

- (here pursued by a Whig enforced poverty and saved by the Stewart refuge) -

It's but my galloping a Mile
Through Canongate with little Loss,
Till I have Sanctuary a while
Within the Girth of Abbay-closs.

There I wan in, and blyth was I
When to the Inner-Court I drew,
My Governour I did defy,
For joy I clapt my Wings and Crew.
There Messengers dare not pursue,
Nor with their Wans Mens Shoulders steer,
There dwells distressed Lairds enough
In peace, though they have little Gear.
I had not tarried an Hour or two
When my blest Fortune was to see
A sight, sure by the mights of Mary,
Of that brave Duke of Albany.
Where one blink of his princely Eye
Put that foul Foundling to the Flight,
Frae me he banish'd Poverty,
And made him take his last Good-night.

("The Banishment of Poverty BY J.D. of ALBANY", ll.149-68, in Watson Choice Collection, I)

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1. Streams from Helicon Or, Poems (2nd edit., Edinburgh 1720)

- and of the thistle that grows where the flower of the Scottish nobility once ruled, the thistle being, as in Butler's 'Weeds of Discord' (Hudibras, Third Part, "Canto II, p.149), the Presbytery. In recasting the historical facts into an old humanist literary mould, the poet recreates civilisation through art; imposes a structure in words where a structure in stone and in human control has been lost. This endeavour he shares with John Gay of whose "Trivia; or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London" - one of the models upon which "AULD REIKIE" is based - Martin C. Battestin rightly asserts,

> Gays manner ... is, however, precisely the embodiment of his meaning in this poem: which is that, though life can be hideous, art offers us a way of coping with it.[1]

In lines 313-50 the issue again is civilisation. Tipped in the balance is Auld Reikie of the recent past - the 1750's and 60's - under Provost George Drummond, six times elected to that post and here noted for his charitable projects especially; and a very depressed Edinburgh, as it had emerged by the early 1770's.[2]

> PEACE to thy Shade, thou wale o' Men,
> DRUMMOND! Relief to Poortith's Pain:
> To thee the greatest Bliss we owe;
> And Tribute's Tear shall grateful flow:
> The Sick are cur'd, the Hungry fed,
> And Dreams of Comfort tend their Bed:
> As lang as FORTH weets LOTHIANS Shore,
> As lang's on FIFE her billows roar,
> Sae lang shall ilk whase Country's dear,
> To thy Remembrance gie a Tear.
> By thee AULD REIKIE thrave, and grew
> Delightfu' to her Childers View:
> Nae mair shall GLASGOW Striplings threap
> Their City's Beauty and its Shape,
> While our New City spreads around
> Her bonny Wings on Fairy Ground.

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1. The Providence of Wit, 128.
2. See, for example, Hamilton An Economic History of Scotland, 323.

But Provosts now that ne'er afford
The smaest dignity to lord,
Ne'er care tho' every scheme gae wild
That DRUMMOND'S sacred hand has cull'd:
The spacious Brig neglected lies,
Tho' plagu'd wi' pamphlets, dunn'd wi' cries;
They heed not tho' destruction come
To gulp us in her gaunting womb.
O shame! that safety canna claim
Protection from a provost's name,
But hidden danger lies behind
To torture and to fleg the mind;
I may as weel bid Arthur's Seat
To Berwick-Law make gleg retreat,
As think that either will or art
Shall get the gate to win their heart;
For POLITICS are a' their mark,
Bribes latent, and corruption dark:
If they can eithly turn the pence,
Wi' city's good they will dispense;
Nor care tho' a' her sons were lair'd
Ten fathom i' the auld kirk-yard.

Pastoral, growth, shelter - 'the greatest Bliss' (1.315), Auld Reikie, like nature, as the parent (her 'Childers View', 1.324), 'AULD REIKIE thrave, and grew' (11.323-24), 'our New City spreads around' (1.327) 'Shade ... Relief to Poortith's Pain' (11.313-14), 'Protection' (1.338) - and counterpastoral, death and vulnerable exposure - 'The spacious Brig neglected lies' (1.333), 'destruction' and 'her gaunting womb' (11.335-36), 'hidden danger' (1.339), 'Bribes latent' (1.346), 'Wi' city's good they will dispense' (1.348), 'her sons ... lair'd ... i' the auld kirk-yard' (11.349-50); recent history and the literary interpretation of it, as by Claudero -

Great DRUMMOND improveth what nature doth send,
To country and city he's always a friend?
Regardless of junto's, his lordship pursues
The weal of the public in all that he does;
Unwearied he studies the good of the town,
And success his labours, for ever must crown,
Tho' opposed of late by Bedlamite Tom,
Who ne'er could do good abroad nor at home;
And likewise by others of far better fame;
What views they had in it my muse shall not name.
With pity he saw the diseas'd without aid,
(Physicians do nothing unless they are paid)
Then straight thro' three kingdoms he sent for supply,
And rear'd up the structure, call'd INFIRMARY,

> Where ev'ry disease that physicians can cure
> Is instantly heal'd, for the rich or the poor.
>
> ("On laying the Foundation Stone of St. Bernard's Mineral Well, 15th September 1760, lately found out near Edinburgh", p.21)

> The chief Magistrate is devoted to the service of the city, and its glory is his greatest aim ... Disinterested are his views, his noble plans proclaim his merit, and his memory shall be dear to posterity.
>
> (A SERMON preached by CLAUDERO, on the Condemnation of the Netherbow Porch of Edinburgh ...", p.55)

-: these are the main elements of a passage distinguishing a progressive modern - though still - humanist society from the Whig order of the day. Drummond allegedly declared when the North Bridge was laid 'that he only now began what the Duke of York (afterwards James VII) proposed',[1] and was, in fact, looked upon, especially in his fight with the notorious Town Council,[2] as a hero by the humanists. Overall, this section balances the previous one negatively, as here there is nothing, no refuge or 'Brokers Guardian Saint' (l.303), to relieve the uncharitable circumstances described.

The closing lines (351-68) are both alike and dissimilar to those of the introduction and, in this respect, afford a neat balance to them. Where the opening began with a 'welcome' from the pastoral muse (ll.7, 17) to an idyllic Auld Reikie, the closing, at first, bids 'farewel' (l.359) from an impoverished town muse to an 'Undecent' (l.352) city of 'stews' and 'bawds' (ll.357-58).

> To sing yet meikle does remain,
> Undecent for a modest strain;
> And since the poet's daily bread is,
> The favour of the Muse or ladies,
> He downa like to gie offence

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1. Kincaid History of Edinburgh, "Footnote*", 93.
2. See Thomas Somerville My Own Life And Times 1741-1814 (Edinburgh 1861) 22.

To delicacy's bonny sense;
Therefore the stews remain unsung,
And bawds in silence drop their tongue.

(11.351-58)

Yet, in the end, Reikie is transfigured into its former pastoral self, 'tow'ring on thy summit green' (1.362). Conceived in a vision from afar, it is like the rural shelter of the opening, but has now become a genuine city of the imagination; in the comparison, a heavenly city (11.363-66) and a literary landscape - to use Kenneth Clark's expression, a 'landscape of symbols'[1] - as with the ending of Mercer's "ARTHUR's SEAT".

HAIL peace of mind! with thee how sweet
To sit sublime on airy Seat!
On airy Seat whose summit high
Lifts the soul from earth to sky!
Careless, casting oft the sight
On distant views of calm delight;
Or pensive, list'ning to the roar
Of dashing wave on sounding shore!
- How sweet, from noisy concourse fled,
And, step by step, at random led,
To seek amusing thought, and climb
To lofty Arthur's Seat sublime!

("ARTHUR's SEAT", p.41)

REIKIE, farewel! I ne'er cou'd part
Wi' thee but wi' a dowy heart;
Aft frae the Fifan coast I've seen,
Thee tow'ring on thy summit green;
So glowr the saints when first is given
A fav'rite keek o' glore and heaven;
On earth nae mair they bend their ein,
But quick assume angelic mein;
So I on Fife wad glowr no more,
But gallop'd to EDINA's shore.

(11.359-68)

The concordia discors tension has thus been attained within the poet, the recreator and restorer of a humanist city which could only exist in verse.

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1. See LANDSCAPE INTO ART (London 1979). The title of the first chapter is "The Landscape of Symbols".

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